
IMPRIMATUR. .

Mali 10: 1686.

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A
DISCOURSE
 Concerning the Worship
 OF THE
Blessed Virgin
 AND THE
SAINTS;
 WITH

An Account of the Beginnings and Rise of
 it amongst CHRISTIANS, in Answer
 to M. de Meaux's Appeal to the *Fourth Age*,
 in his *Exposition and Pastoral Letter*.

L O N D O N,

Printed for *Tho. Bassett* at the George in *Fleetstreet*,
 and *Tho. Newborough* at the Star in *St. Paul's*
 Church-Yard, 1686.

A

DISCOURSE

Concerning the Worship

OF GOD

delivered at the

First Church

in New York

WITH

AN APPENDIX
CONTAINING
A COLLECTION OF
THE PRINCIPAL
DOCTRINES OF THE
CHRISTIAN FAITH

O F

The Worship of the B. Virgin

AND

The SAINTS.

§. I.

THE Gentlemen of the Church of *Rome* have been pleased lately to send Books amongst us of a very different strain : On the one side *Popery Misrepresented and Represented*, but especially *Monfieur de Ms. Exposition of the Roman Doctrine* : On the other side our Ladies *Rosary*, and the *Contemplation of her Life and Glory*, &c. which go up and down, though not so openly as the other. And we believe they have Books in readinefs, to explain over again their Meaning in the other Articles (treated of in the *Exposition*) at the same rate, that their Books of particular Devotion to our Lady, do explain the Articles of *Religious Worship*, and *Invocation of Saints*.

In the mean time they seem to believe, that there are no Articles will bear a Representation in their true Colours, sooner or better than these. And the truth is, as Mankind has in all Ages been very prone to Superstition, so to no kind of it more than to that of Worshipping *Dead Men and Women*; which being the Practice they would reconcile us

What Honor is due

to, in the first place, we are concerned the more thoroughly to examine, what they now think fit to say for it.

But let no man think, that in this Cause, we are engaged against the Saints departed, because we contend with their Worshippers. Let no Man take our Refusal to honor them, as their Worshippers honor them, for an argument that we do not honor them at all. We are content to be tryed by that known Rule of St. *Austin*, that *they are to be honor'd for Imitation, not to be adored for Religion*. We believe, that the highest honor we can do them, is to follow their Examples. We love their Memories, we celebrate Anniversary Commemorations of their Piety and Virtues, especially of their Sufferings for Righteousness sake; we congratulate their Victories over the World; we rejoyce in their Glory and Happiness; we propound their Examples to the Imitation of the Faithful, exciting them to live as the Saints once lived, that they at length may inherit those *Promises*, which *by their Faith and Patience* in this World, the Saints now inherit in the other; we praise God for them, as often as we meet together at the Holy Table of our Lord: And when we meet to interr our Christian Brethren, we pray to God *to hasten his Kingdom, that we with all those that are departed in the true Faith of his Holy Name, may have our perfect Consummation and Bliss, both in Body and Soul, in his everlasting Glory*.

Thus we honor the departed Saints, remembering all along, that though they are highly exalted above us, who are here below imprison'd in earthly Bodies, and struggling in a sinful World with Infirmities and Temptations; we yet belong to the same Body, of which they are Members, and that they are still our Fellow-Servants. We are persuaded, they have not less but rather more Charity for us, than they had for the Church, when they lived upon the Earth; but whether they know us in particular or not, or
in.

To the B. Virgin, and the Saints.

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in what instances they express their Charity towards us, God having made no Revelations of these things; we can define nothing about them; and therefore we dare not give them those Honors, which suppose such an Assurance of these things, as God hath thought fit to deny us.

As to the Virgin *Mary* in particular, we do with Men and Angels acknowledge, that she was *Blessed amongst Women*, since she brought forth the Saviour of Mankind, and the Lord of Heaven and Earth; since she was not the *Mother* only, but the *Virgin Mother* also of our Lord, and conceived him by the Power of the Holy Ghost. Which Confession so honourable to her, being inseparable from a right Belief concerning our Lord *Jesus*, we do not only set it forth upon the Anniversary of the *Annuntiation*, but frequently also in our *Sermons*, and daily in the *Creed*. Moreover, we take these singular Graces of God towards her, in Conjunction with other things of a more common quality: We doubt not, but she was an excellently Pious and Virtuous Person. We see by her Behaviour, when the Angel *Gabriel* Luke 1. came to her, that she was not apt to be imposed upon by counterfeit Visions and Revelations; nor forward to believe great things of her self; nor lifted up with Pride, because she was so highly Favoured; but that upon this extraordinary occasion, she wholly resigned her Self to the disposal of God, with a Wisdom and Humility, that could not but be habitual. But if nothing at all had been said of her personal Qualities in the Scriptures (as indeed there is but very little;) we might have presumed without Rashness, that because God (who has no less regard to a holy Mind than to a pure Body) would have the Mother of our Lord to retain the Purity of a Virgin, he would also chuse a most holy Virgin to be his Mother; and since he was pleased to send us so Heavenly a Treasure in an Earthen Vessel, he would chuse one of the greatest Honor. For

The B. Virgin and the Saints dishonored,

which reason likewise, we might have concluded without other Testimony, that she became afterwards a faithful Disciple of her Son. For when one in admiration of him cryed out, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps that gave thee Suck.* Tea rather, said he, *Blessed are they that bear the word of God, and keep it:* without which Blessedness she that bore him in her Womb, and nourished him at her Breasts, would have been justly esteemed by all generations, the most unhappy and miserable Creature in the World. Finally, from all this we cannot but conclude, that she is very happy and glorious in the Kingdom of Heaven. For though we have no particular Revelations concerning this, to warrant any Comparisons of her state, with that of *Angels and Archangels*; yet upon general Reasons we may say, with sufficient assurance, That her Rewards and Glories in Heaven are exceeding great, and such as hold proportion, not only with her Faith and Patience (for as some think she suffered Martyrdom;) but likewise with that Honor, which God was pleased to confer upon her in this World.

Now if any thing remains, whereby to express the Tenderness we have for the honor of the *B. Virgin*, it is this, That we should do what we can to redeem her Name, from that dishonorable Imputation of affecting Glories, that cannot belong to the most Excellent Creature, that is but a Creature. For they who by most solemn Rites of Religious Service address to her, as to the *Queen of Heaven and Earth*, would make us believe, and pretend to believe themselves, that she is pleased with that Worship, which they offer to her. But if, as we say, they yield to her those Services, which no Creature is to receive; they do by consequence represent her as a *Lady*, that aspires to the Glory of the Most High; which is by no means for the Glory of the *B. Virgin*. And if their Saint-Worship be liable to the same charge, thus also they

they represent the other Saints. Now tho' in opposing their Doctrine and Practice, we are principally moved, by that Concern we ought to have for the Glory of our Creator and Saviour; yet it is some inducement to us so to do, that we shall thereby vindicate the *B. Virgin* also, and all the glorified Saints. For if she knows what passes amongst Mortals, she cannot but be displeased at those Services, that have been and still are paid to her, by some of her Son's Disciples; and if she said any thing at all to 'em, she would say to her Votaries, but with greater indignation, what the Angel said to St. John falling at his feet to worship him, *See thou do it not: I am thy Fellow-Servant: Worship God.*

Rev. 19. 10.

The same I say of the Angels, the Apostles, the Martyrs and all the Saints, whom they honor with the same kind of Worship, that they give to the *B. Virgin*. Only the Degree of her Worship, and the Frequency of their Addresses to her, and the Strength of their Confidence in her is so much greater, that they have thought fit to invent a word of Art to express it by. *Hyperdulia* they call it; a word which our people cannot understand better, then by knowing the Practice which it is a name for.

It is so vast a proportion of Religious Service which they render to her, it consists of so many Parts and Diversities, that it were a Labour to recount them, as particularly as the Case would bear. It shall suffice to mention some of the principal Heads. They worship her with Religious Prayers and Vows. They erect Churches and Oratories for her Service; where they worship her, very Images and Pictures, and pretended Reliques. They make Rosaries, and compose Hours, Psalters, and other Forms of Devotion to her. They ask things of her, that are proper to be asked of God only. They burn Incense to her Images, and offer their very Sacrifice of the Mass in her Honor.

Now as to this, and all the rest, we cannot but stand amazed,

Of the Worship of the B. Virgin, and the Saints

amazed, that this Service of the B. Virgin should grow to be one of the principal parts of their Religion; when the H. Scriptures have not given us the least intimation of Rule or Example for it, or of any Doctrine or Practice that leads to it. That it should be a main design of their Catechismes, to instruct Youth in the Worship of the B. Virgin; of their Sermons to excite the People to put Confidence in her, and to call upon her for the present occasion; of their Books of Devotion to direct them how to pray to her, and magnify her in Formal Invocations; of their Confessors to injoyne Penitents to say so many *Ave Marias*, in satisfaction for their sins and to make at least as frequent Applications to *Mary* as to *Jesus* himself, for deliverance from Sins and Dangers: When not one word, not one Intimation of any thing, like to any thing of all this, is left upon record in the Writings of the *Evangelists* and *Apostles*; from whom those men pretend to derive their Religion; whose Books are large enough for this so famous a Service, to have been at least mentioned somewhere or other; and who, without all doubt, would have more then mentioned it, if it had been the Religion of those Times. This is that we must always wonder at, and so much the more, because the constant Tenor of the Holy Scriptures, bears against such Practices as these, agreeably to that Precept of both Testaments, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

And indeed our Reasons, to keep at a distance from this worship of the B. Virgin and the Saints, are so obvious and commonly known, that I shall not make it a Business by it self to represent them. But these two things I shall consider, as well as I can;

1. *The plausible Expositions and Colours, by which they have tryed of late to justify themselves in these things.*

2. *What were the Beginnings of this kind of Worship amongst Christians, and by what steps it is grown to that height, in which*

which we now see it. I shall consider the former in a narrow compass, because much has been said to it already. The latter is what I chiefly design.

§. 2.

IN pursuance of the first thing propounded, I shall particularly observe how *Monsieur de Meaux* hath expounded these Matters, under the heads of *Religious Worship*, of *Invocation of Saints*, and *giving honor to Images and Reliques*. But I shall begin with the two latter, because he expounds these particularly; and then I shall consider the general Defence he makes, for all the Religious Worship they give to the B. Virgin, and to the Saints.

The Worship of Invocation, is the Foundation of a great many other things done in her Service. For instance, It is this that hath brought forth the *Rosary*, the *Psalters*, the *Hours*, and all other *Offices* of Devotion to her. It is this that hath raised her *Shrines*, and built *Oratories* and *Chapels* for her especial Service. And indeed, if she as well as God is to be worshipped with Prayers and Hymns, it is but reasonable, that she should have her *holy Places* for such Services, as well as God. And yet *St. Austin* thought the erecting of Temples to be so proper an act of Divine Worship that if we should do it to the most excellent Angel, we should be anathematized from the Church of God. Whereas therefore our Churches are known from one another in *Cities* and populous *Towns*, by the names of several Saints; yet we profess that, however for distinction sake they are so called, they are God's Houses and Oratories, and not theirs; and it is most manifest, that they are used by us for his Worship, and not for theirs, in whole or in part.

The Invocation of the B. *Virgin* and the *Saints*, has run out into some Excesses, from which they might have separated

Cont. Maxion.
Arian. lib. 1.
c. 11.

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separated it; and therefore to these Excesses I shall say but a little, especially because they defend them very faintly, and with great appearances of self-Condernnation.

It was too much in all reason, that the Council of Trent

(a) *Self. 25.*

de Invoc. S.

Bellar. de sanct.

Beatit. lib. 1.

c. 20.

(b) *Exp. p. 8.*

(a) allowed of *Mental*, as well as *Vocal*, Prayers to be made to the Saints; for this ascribes to them the Knowledge of the Secrets of Hearts. And 'tis a very faint Plea for this, which Monsieur de Meaux (b) makes in saying, that God did not disdain to discover future things to the Prophets, tho they appear much more particularly reserved to his own knowledge. For this does not clear Mental Praying to the Saints, from the consequences we charge it with, unless they were sure, that as God discovered some future things to the Prophets, so he does also perpetually reveal the Prayers of our mind to the Saints. The Instance shews what is needless, that God can do it if he please; it does not shew that he does it, and that only would have been to the purpose.

Besides, whatever Opinion they have of the Lawfulness and Profitableness of praying to Saints, they should have been very much afraid, to affirm them to be *Mediators of Intercession*; when without any distinction, the Scripture does not only give to Christ the Quality of a Mediator, as *M. de*

(c) *Exp. p. 6.*

Meaux (c) grants; but likewise the Quality of our Only Mediator, as he should have granted. For as there is one God, so

(d) *1 Tim. 2. 5.*

(d) there is one Mediator between God and Men, the Man Christ Jesus. Much less should Men have been encouraged to make immediate Applications to the Saints, more frequently than to God, or to Christ; as if the Saints were more easily prevailed with by our Prayers, than our God and Saviour. These Excesses were too notorious to be denied; but withall they were too Scandalous to be confessed; but in all reason they ought to have been severely reprov'd. *M. de Meaux* would have us to observe, that the Council teaches, *It is good and profitable to pray to the Saints.*

And

As it stands in the Church of Rome.

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And we do observe, that tho the Fathers were not insensible of the extravagant Practices and Doctrines in this matter, that were currant amongst them, yet they would not vouchsafe to note them with the least Censure; but were content to let them go on, as they had done before.

Moreover, they pray to the B. Virgin, to *protect them from the Enemy, to receive them at the hour of Death, to be propitious to them, to spare them, to give them strength, to give them grace, to open the gate of Everlasting life to them;* and for all that a good Christian can ask of God. Such like Prayers do they also offer to the other Saints. But neither shall I stay upon this; because they do not go about to justify it amongst us, otherwise then by pretending, that they say what they do not mean: and that *the Intention of the Church and of her Faithful, reduces these* Exp. p. 6. *Prayers always to this Form,* that the Saints would pray for us. Now when they confess, that *the outward Veneration is established to testify the inward sentiments of the Mind,* P. 9. we desire no greater evidence of self-Condernnation in this Case, then to hear them say quite backward, that the intention of the Church and her Faithful, is established to explain the meaning of so considerable a part of their outward Worship. But in the mean time God help the common People, if they are to be judged after their own Intentions and Understandings, and not the Intentions and Expositions of some few Guides of their Church.

To name no more of these Enormities; their dividing to the Saints their several Offices in their Prayers to them, is a most unaccountable Superstition, *i. e.* That one Saint is applied to for the cure of one Disease, and another for another, and some peculiar things desired of almost every one. For how can they perswade us, that they desire nothing of the Saints, but the help of their Prayers, when they attribute to each Saint his particular Vertue and Pow-

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er; unless they think that St. *Apollonia's* Intercession is not as effectual against the Gout, as the Tooth-ach?

§. 3.

But setting aside these Excesses, which several moderate Men of their own Church have complain'd of, but all to no purpose; let us hear what they say in behalf of Praying to the B. Virgin, and to the Saints at all, supposing it be for nothing, but to pray for them, as one Creature may do for another, and that they speak to her and them, in Hymns and Strains, which as to the matter therein contained, do not exalt them above the condition of Creatures: In one word, why they address to her, and the rest of the Saints, with any sort of formal Invocation.

We dare not do this, because we believe Prayer to be an Essential Part of Gods Worship, inasmuch as 'tis sometimes put for the whole. *How shall they call upon him, in whom they have not believed?* i.e. How shall they serve and Worship him? 'Tis so incommunicable a Worship, that God himself described his own House by it. *My house shall be called an house of Prayer.* And surely when God named his house, by some part, of that Service that was performed there, he would chuse such a part as was peculiar to himself. This and much more we say for our selves.

(a) What have they to say to this Prayer? Pray for us. Is it not word for word St. Pauls? Is it more injurious to the Creator, because in the same Spirit we address to the Saints that live with him. Past. Let. p. 16.

Exp. p. 6.

But to all that we can say, they give this plausible Answer, (a) That it makes no more against their practice, in desiring the Prayers of their Brethren in Heaven, then against theirs and ours, in desiring the Prayers of our Brethren upon Earth; and, as *Monfieur de M. sayes*, that it is profitable to pray to the Saints, in the same Spirit of Charity, and according to the same order of Fraternal Society, which moves us to demand assistance of our Brethren living upon Earth.

Now this is a very popular way to save themselves from Blame,

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blame, but by no means sufficient. For there is a Concurrence of other Reasons to make it profitable to desire the Prayers of our Brethren upon Earth, besides these two, that *they are our Brethren*, and that *we love one another*. God has manifestly approved it in the Holy Scriptures ; that is one Reason : Besides, we are also sure, that when we desire our Brethren upon Earth to pray for us, that they hear us ; that is another reason. But neither of these Reasons can be justly produced, to shew the Profitableness of Praying to the Saints departed.

But because this is the most common and colourable Defence they make ; I shall further shew, what may and ought to be replied to it, by the People of our Communion. They say, we may as lawfully desire those in Heaven to Pray for us, as those on Earth. But let us then tell them, that when we ask of one another things proper to be asked, these Requests are by no means that which we understand by *Prayer*, or *Religious Invocation* : and that themselves do not so account them. *Monsieur de M.* clearly gives them another name, he calls it *beseeking* or *demanding the assistance of our Brethren*. But men of all Religions do agree, this to be a quite different thing, from that part of Religion which we call *Prayer*. p. 6. 7.

And to make this matter so plain, that it can neither be misunderstood nor denied : Suppose a Man visited with the Pestilence, or any other dangerous Distemper, to desire his Physitian to apply his best Skill to recover him : Is this Prayer or Religious Invocation ? No ; they will not say it is. But if the same Person desires the *B. Virgin*, or *St. Roche*, or *St. Sebastian* to restore him to health. This they will confess to be Prayer. And the reason of the Difference is not, that the Physitian is desired to help the Patient, by his skill in natural Remedies ; and the Saints by their Intercession with God. For suppose that the Patient sends

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for the Priest, and desires him to pray for him, they will not say that this Desire is a Prayer to the Priest, or a Religious Invocation of him: They will tell you, that the Sick Man desires or *demands the assistance* of the Priests Prayers. But still if he calls upon the *B. Virgin*, or any of the Saints departed, to help him by their Prayers; this is properly, and in the account of Religion, praying to them. What then is the reason of the Difference; for here is a Request made to the Priest and to the Saint, and the same Request too: why is one, Prayer, and the other not? Now though we should not perfectly agree with our Adversaries, about the reason of the Difference; yet so long as it is and must be acknowledged, that the honest Requests, we make to one another upon Earth, are not that part of Religion which we call Prayer; but that the Requests, which we make to the departed Saints, are Prayer; so long, I say, as this is granted 'tis plain, That this their common Argument, *It is lawful and profitable, to desire the assistance of our Brethrens Prayers here upon Earth, and therefore it is lawful and profitable, to call upon those in Heaven to assist us with their Prayers;* is very deceitful. For this is as much as to say: Those Requests which *are not Prayer*, may be lawfully made to Creatures; and therefore those which *are Prayer*, may be made to Creatures, as lawfully as those that are not.

Now if you desire to know, what it is in this case that makes the difference: I think the Answer is very plain. For the difference is not to be taken. 1. From the Matter of the Request, for that is the same: Nor 2. from the Persons themselves to whom the request is made; for if the Saint departed were here, why would my requesting of the same thing, be Prayer to him, and not to the Priest? And therefore 3. It must necessarily lye in the different Circumstances of the Priest, and the Saint; that the former is with me, and the latter is absent from me. Requests made to the

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Faithful, are made to those that are *within the compass of civil Conversation*: But the same Requests made to the *B. Virgin* and the *Saints*, are made to those that are departed out of the compass of civil Conversation. And this is that which makes them not to be Prayer in the former case, and to be Prayer in the latter.

But if it be further inquired, why it is *Prayer* to ask the same things of those that are distant from civil Conversation, which to ask of those that are within the compass of it, is *not Prayer*? The Reason seemes plainly to be this, That when I address my self to one that is within the compass of civil Conversation, in which Men use to hear or to understand one another; my Assurance that he hears me, does no way ascribe to him a Knowledge or a Presence, which is *above the Condition of a Creature*. But if I invoke the *Saints* every where with Assurance that they hear me; I have no other reasonable ground of such Assurance, then that they are every where present at the same time: For if I acknowledge, that there is a certain limited Compass, within which they can hear and know; let this Limit be never so wide, how can I be assured, that they are not out of that Compass when I speak to them? But the *Romanists* pray every where to every *Saint*, believing that they are heard. *It is certain*, says one of them, (e) *that the Saints know what we bring forth by the Affection of the Heart only.* (f) *It is of Faith*, saith another, *that the Blessed know our Prayers which we pour out to them, else it were in vain to make them.* Now a Request does undoubtedly become *Prayer*, or *Religious Invocation*, when the making of it attributes any Divine Privilege or Perfection, to the Being that is called upon; and therefore, because Immensity of Presence is an incommunicable Perfection of God; and because also Requests made to those, that are out of all lines of civil Communication,

(e) Bellar. de
sanct. Beat. l. 1.
c. 20.
(f) Pefant. 1:
Thom. qu. 12.
Art. 10. dis-
put. 7.

be-

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being made in Faith, do ascribe that Power to them which is proper to God only : Therefore such Requests are properly Prayer, or Religious Invocation.

It is indeed very possible, that he that prays to the *B. Virgin*, and to the *Saints*, may not believe that they are Omnipresent ; but if he prayes, as they pretend to do in the *R. Church*, with Assurance, that they hear him, his Prayer implies it, and himself by Construction of the Fact ascribes it to them. For let him, if he can, produce any other reasonable ground of Assurance that they hear him wheresoever and whensoever he addresses to them. But instead of that *M. de Meaux* tells us, That *the Church contents her self to teach with All Antiquity* (not all Antiquity I am sure) *those Prayers to be very profitable to such who make them, whether it be the Saints know them, by the Ministry and Communication of Angels, who according to the Testimony of the Scripture, know what passes amongst us, &c. whether it be, that God himself makes known to them our Desires by a particular Revelation : or lastly, whether it be that he discovers the Secret to them in his Divine Essence, in which all Truth is comprized.* Now if his Church could have taught us, upon what grounds they are assured, that the Saints do hear them either, this way or that way ; or that God has in general revealed to us, that they hear or know the Prayers we make to them, one way or other, and therefore, that it is profitable to pray to them ; she had not been content to teach, that the Saints do know them some way or other, though she knows not how or why. For what foundation that they hear us, can be gathered from such uncertain and loose Conjectures, as these are ? Can any Man convince me that a thing is done, by telling me that it might be done by some way or other, for any thing he knows to the contrary ? And is this kind of Arguing, a sufficient Ground to establish so solemn a part of Religion,

Exp. p. 8.

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as the Invocation of Saints? I know 'tis possible for God to reveal to my Friend in the *East-Indies*, what I say here in *England*: But am I sure, that if I say to him an *Ora pro nobis* at this distance, it reaches him forthwith? It were no difficult matter, if it were needful, to find them trouble enough to clear these very Conjectures from Absurdity; but as long as they are only Conjectures; they can be no Foundation of a certain Perswasion. Whereas therefore, *M. de Meaux* says, *It is manifest, that to say a Creature may have the knowledge of these Prayers, by a Light communicated to him by God, is not so elevate a Creature above his Condition.* I say, it is as manifest, that this is no ground of Certainty, that the Saints hear our Prayers at all; and if this be all they have to say, and yet will pretend to pray to them with Faith; there is but one ground left for that Faith, *viz.* That the Saints are every where present, and are therefore elevated above the Condition of Creatures: Which though some of themselves do not believe, yet their Assurance to be heard, being altogether unreasonable without that belief; their Prayers do give the Omni-presence of God to Creatures, which is indeed the great reason, why their Addresses to the Saints are properly Prayers.

This therefore I lay down, and let them remove it if they can; that to invoke any Creature, who is out of the compass of civil Conversation, *i.e.* with whom I cannot converse, as we do with one another, by speaking within the known distances of Hearing, or by Writing, or Messages or the like, is in it self a vain and foolish thing, because he is out of distance. But if I pretend, that it is profitable to invoke the Saints, and this upon Assurance that they hear me, tho I can neither tell which way in particular, nor can shew in general, that they do certainly hear me some way, that does not infer their Omni-presence; there is no remedy, but my Invocation of them must by consequence confess, that they are *Omnipresent*.

Let

Our requesting one anothers Prayers, &c.

Let therefore those of our Communion say, that by calling upon God, they do acknowledge his Omnipresence, as well as his other Infinite Perfections: and that they are such Acknowledgments, which make their Invocation of God, *Religious Invocation*, or that which is *Prayer* in the account of Religion: And therefore, that they dare not call upon the Saints departed; because they being without the compass of civil Conversation, or of such means of Communication, as we have with one another in this World; we cannot be reasonably assured, that they hear us, unless we will suppose them to be omnipresent; which as we do not believe, so we dare not do any thing that looks as if we did believe it.

Thus have I shewn, what in our Judgment makes the difference, between asking fit things of our Brethren upon Earth, and asking the same things of our Brethren in Heaven; why one is not Prayer, and the other is; *viz.* Because the Living are within our compass, and the Dead are out of it. But whatever it is that makes the difference; since the honest Requests, we make to one another in this World, *are not Prayer*, and the Requests we make to the Saints in Heaven *are Prayer*; it does not follow, that we may request the same things of *These*, as we may of *Those*: For if the Argument be put into proper Expressions, nothing can be more apparently inconsequent; for then it would run thus: Because I make my Requests known to those, to whom I do not offer the *Religious Worship of Prayer* in so doing, therefore I may represent my Desires to those too whom I cannot call upon, but my desires become the *Worship of Prayer, or Religious Invocation*.

And from hence it appears, that tho' this Act of Religious Worship, be given by those of the *R. Church* to the the meanest Saint; yet after the most plausible Defence they

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they make of their practice in so doing, it is not to be given to the most excellent Creature, and therefore not to the *B. Virgin* her self. And by this we may judge, what a Cause they have to maintain, who call upon the *Saints*, and especially upon the *B. Virgin*, in strains so unsuitable to the condition of Creatures; as they are whom they invoke: when because they are but Creatures, they ought not to invoke them at all, since they are out of that compass of Conversation, in which only we could speak to them as to Creatures, with Faith that they hear us.

§. 4.

To come to the next particular; when they kneel to the Images of the *B. Virgin* and the *Saints*, and prostrate, and *humble themselves* and Pray before them; we are given to understand, there is no harm in all this; *they attribute no other vertue to the Images, but that of exciting the remembrances of those they represent; and their intention is not so much to honor the Image, as to honor the Apostle or the Martyr in the presence of the Image.* As if the Image were present, to see and observe the Honour that is done the Apostle or Martyr: For it is no great honor that any body gets, by being honored in the presence of mere Wood or Stone, that can neither see nor hear. This was an odd expression of *M. de Meaux*, this of *honoring the Martyr in the presence of the Image*, no way suitable to the design of his Exposition; but fitted only to the Superstition of such People, who have been made to believe, by the *weeping and smiling* of Images, and by the *rowling* of their *Eyes*, and by the *shaking* of their *Heads and Bodies*, &c. that they are a kind of animated things. But to let this pass; what though *M. de Meaux* attributes no other virtues to Images, but that of exciting Remembrance? What tho he

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takes

Worshipping Images cannot be justified,

takes a very commendable Care in his *Dioceſs*, to make the People ſtop there ? Does he not know by experience, do not all wiſe Men know it, and many honeſt Men in the Communion of that Church confeſs it, that in thoſe Images which the people are taught to preſent themſelves before, with all the Ceremonies of Reſpect and Veneration ; there is another fatal *Virtue*, and that is to *excite devotion toward themſelves*, even to the demanding of Favours from them, and putting Truſt in them ? Is it not as notorious, that the wretched People are guilty of worſhipping the Images of the Saints, no otherwiſe than they do the Saints themſelves, as that they Worſhip the Saints no otherwiſe then they Worſhip God himſelf ; as *Eudov. Vives* complained. If it be ſaid that theſe Abuſes may be provided againſt, and Images may be ſtill *Honor'd* (for *Honor* is the Word, though *Religious worſhip* is the Thing) I would know, why men ſhould make Proviſions in this caſe, as if they were wiſer than God, who to prevent theſe miſchiefs has forbidden Image-worſhip altogether. If there were any ſuch Advantages to be made of it, in compariſon to which the Danger of it were nothing at all, how comes it to be ſo ſeverely Prohibited ? But when we conſider, for whoſe ſake chiefly they pretend the Profitableneſs of Image-worſhip ; we ſee how true it is, that the Wiſdom of Man is but Fooliſhneſs, when it would mend the proviſions of God. For Images are by all means to be retain'd and honor'd, becauſe they are the Books and Remembrances of the *Common People* ; and Helps to their Piety and Devotions ; who therefore cannot be without them : But *M. de Meaux*, knows that theſe are moſt apt to be led into the worſt Superſtitious by Images, and that it is one of the hardeſt things in the World to prevent it.

M. de Meaux tells us, *their Intention is not ſo much to honor the Image, as the Apoſtle or Martyr. He will ſay too, that*

*Com. in Civit. D.
Lib. 8. c. 27.*

*Trid. ſeſſ. 25.
De Invoc. S.*

that 'tis the Intention of the Church, that none of the People should intend more then this comes to. But let him tell me, how or where the Church has exprest her self, with the least degree of that Zeal, which the redressing of such horrible abuses in this matter, as are every where known, does still require. The Superstition of the vulgar in their Communion is notorious, and which is still worse, the Doctrines leading to the most Superstitious Opinions and Practices in this kind, were and are notorious; for instance; That the *same worship is due to the Image, which is due to the Prototype*: And are not these things uncensured by the Church of Rome to this day? If indeed we could once see that Church bestir her self, against the gross Excess of Image-worship, as she does against those that do not worship Images at all, we might allow something to this Exposition of their *Intentions*. But as far as we can see, they that worship the very Images themselves, and put confidence in them, go for very good *Catholics*; while we that dare not worship them at all, because God has forbidden it, are for our forbearance used, as they use *Hereticks*.

But setting all this aside, what signifies the *Intention* of the Church, if it ran through all the Members of it, against an expresse Prohibition in the Scriptures? It is not lawful to do that with a Distinction, which is forbidden without a distinction. God hath said, *Thou shalt not bow down to Images, nor worship them*. If indeed he had elsewhere made an Exception to this Rule, it had been lawful for us to have made use of his permission, it had been necessary for us to have observed his command in the excepted Case. But where God hath not excepted or distinguished, we ought not to do so: unless we will open a door, to evacuate all divine Laws whatsoever, by arbitrary Distinctions and Reservations.

Religious Worship of Images universally forbidden.

In short, that Worship which they pretend to give to the Saints by their Images, has these two terrible Prejudices against it.

1. That the Honor, which they give to the Saints by their Images, supposing none of it to be lost by the way, is not to be given to the Saints themselves; as we have shewn already.

2. That the Worship of Images, let it be explicated with all the Fineness and Arts of Disguise they are Masters of, is after all to be utterly excluded out of Religion. This being a Worship, which God will by no means endure should be given to himself, having universally prohibited it. *Thou shalt not make to thy self any graven Image, nor the likeness of any thing that is &c.* which is to my understanding, as plain a Prohibition of all Image-worship whatsoever, as these words would have been an Injunction of it, viz. *Thou shalt make to thy self such or such Images and Pictures, and shalt bow down before them and worship them,* if this had been said instead of the contrary. Now indeed if this had been said, it had been extremely necessary to distinguish, between *Relative* Worship and *Absolute* Worship, between Worship *terminated upon the Image*, and *intended to the person represented by the Image*; between taking it for a *God* or a *Saint*, and taking it only for *some Representation* of the one or the other. But as in that case such distinctions had been very necessary, so as the case stands they are vain and impertinent. For if Image-worship had been commanded or permitted, still we had been to worship Images, but as Images: But it being forbidden, we are not to worship them at all. I say if it had been allowed, we must indeed have worshipped them with a Distinction; but as it is forbidden, we must not worship them tho' with a distinction, because 'tis forbidden without any distinction, and as universally as words can express any thing;

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M. de Meaux says, that after the same manner, we ought to understand the Honor which they pay to Reliques after the Example of the Primitive Church. The Example of the Primitive Church, shall be considered in its place. In the mean time, If the Worship of Images, and the Worship of Reliques, are to stand or fall together, we have already seen, what will become of this; having shewn how unsuccessfully they plead for the other. But if M. de Meaux, pleads for the Practice of the people, or even the Doctrine of his Church in this Point; he must pardon us, if we do not think fit, to take general Apologies, for a reasonable Inducement, to do those things, which he was not willing to name in particular. We may say in general, says M. de Meaux; That if Protestants would but consider, how the Affection which we bear to any one propagates it self, without being divided, to his Children, to his Friends; and after that, by several degrees to the Representation of him, to any Remains of him, and to any thing which renews in us his Remembrance. If they did but conceive, that Honor has the like Progression, seeing Honor is nothing else, but Love mixed with Respect and Fear: In fine, if they would but consider, that all the exterior Worship of the Catholick Church, has its Source in God himself, and returns back again to him: They would never believe, that this Worship, which he himself alone animates, could excite his Jealousie. M. de Meaux, considered very well, that it was much better, to put us off with this general Account, than to mention the Particulars he goes about to Justifie. It seems, the Worship of Reliques, is intended for the Honor of the Martyrs, and the Worship of the Martyrs, for the Honor of God. But what kind of Superstition might not be defended by such Apologies as these; if men's Blood, Bones, Teeth, Hairs, Coats, Girdles, Shoes, and such like little things, may be incensed; if they may be exposed, with

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with a *Venite ad adorandum*, to receive the Prostrations of the people, in the presence of *Christ* himself, whom they suppose to be bodily present upon the Altar: if they may be sought unto for *great Graces*, and for *miraculous Cures*; if they may be carried about, to preserve a man from Fire, from Storms, from Pestilence, from the Danger of Battle, and from ghostly, as well as bodily, Enemies: If all this, I say, be but the Effect of a *Progression of Honor*, and may be brought off with a Protestation, that the Worship is *animated by God alone*, and is performed for his sake.

M. de Meaux says, That if God, as jealous as he is of the Love of men, does not look upon us, as dividing our selves betwixt him and his Creatures, when we Love our Neighbour, for the Love of him; the same God, though jealous of the Honor which his Faithful pay him, cannot look upon them, as dividing that Worship, which is due to him alone, when out of Respect to him, they honor those whom he hath honored. But as there may be an inordinate Love of our Neighbour, whom yet God hath commanded us to love; so there may be an inordinate Honor, given by us, even to those whom God hath honoured: And if we go beyond the Bounds that God hath set us, in loving the one, and honouring the other; if we love our Neighbour, as we should love God only; if we honor the Martyrs and the Saints, as God only ought to be honored; it will I presume, be no sufficient Excuse to say, that it was done out of *Respect to God*. The thing which M. de Meaux should have spoken to, but has not, is this, That the Honor they pay to Reliques, is not part of that Worship, which is due to none but God. Without this 'tis in vain, to flourish out a general Notion which no man denies, viz. That we may so Love the Faithful, and Honor the Martyrs, and the very *Reliques* of Martyrs, as not to divide between them and God, the Love and Worship which is due to him alone. The truth is, M. de

Meaux

Dissembled, but not defended by M. de Meaux.

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Meaux had a very hard Task in the *Exposition* of the Veneration, which they give to *Reliques*. For, whereas he had some Colour to insist upon the moderation of his Church, in the Business of *Images*, since the Council of *Trent* declares, that there is no Virtue in them, for which they ought to be revered, or trusted in; yet he wanted such a Declaration as this, as to the business of *Reliques*, and could not say, that either the Council, or the Catechism declares against believing any Virtue in *Reliques*; since notwithstanding, the Caution they have used in the manner of Expression, both the one, and the other teach the contrary. So that the Superstition of *Reliques* in the R. C. is greater than that of *Images*. And therefore, *M. de M.* had nothing to do, but to set off the whole Matter by general Apologies, because it would not bear a Defence of the Particulars. But of this, I shall say no more, because the *Exposition* he makes of their Doctrine and Practice, as to this matter, is very like to that which he makes of the general difference, between that Worship which they give to God alone, and that which they give to the B. V. and the Saints. Which is the next thing I am to consider.

§. 5.

They teach, That the Adoration which is due to God alone, consists principally, in believing he is the Creator and Lord of all things; and in adhering to him, with all the Powers of our Soul, by Faith, Hope and Charity, as to him alone, who can render us happy, by the Communication of an Infinite Good, which is himself. This interior Adoration, has Exp. p. 4. its exterior Marks; of which the principal is Sacrifice, which cannot be offered to any, but to God; because a Sacrifice is establish'd to make a publick Acknowledgement, and a solemn Protestation of God's Sovereignty, and our absolute Dependence.

M. de Meaux's Distinction of Religious Worship.

p. 5.

pendance. Thus the Worship they give to God only is described. Concerning the Worship they give to the *B. Virgin*, and the *Saints*, thus M. de Meaux speaks: *The Church teaches us, that all Religious Worship ought to terminate in God, as its necessary End; and that if the Honor which she renders to the B. Virgin, and to the Saints, may in some sense be called Religious, it is for its necessary Relation to God.*

We shall now be better able to examine the Difference, which he puts in general between the *Adoration which is due to God alone*, and that Honor which they render to the *B. Virgin and the Saints*, because we have seen in great part, *in what this Honor consists*,

What M. de M. has said concerning the inward Adoration of God, is exceedingly well said. But if we go on, and take altogether, we cannot but discern, That this great Man had laboured his Thoughts into such words, as should provide with great appearance of Piety for the Honor of God, that *We* might not be offended; while yet he was to save some of it for the *B. Virgin and the Saints*, that he might not seem to desert the Cause of his Church.

For whereas he distinguisheth between the inward and outward Worship, which is due to God only, he avoids that Distinction, in speaking of the Honor which they render to the *B. Virgin and the Saints*; for it had been a dangerous way of exposing the Doctrine of the pretended *Catholicks*, to tell us what *inward or mental* Worship is to be given them.

Self. 3.

Whereas the Title of the Section is, *That Religious Worship is terminated in God alone*; when he was to speak of the Honor they render to the *B. Virgin and to the Saints*; he qualifies it with this Supposition, *If it may in some sense be called religious*. Now to say, *If it be Religious*; nay,

may if it may be ca'led Religious, and that but in some sense too, are very new and surprizing ways of expression; and would make one suspect that all of them are not fully satisfied in giving a Worship to the B. Virgin and to the Saints, which without all Question is, and therefore ought to be called, Religious Worship; as those that have gone before them in this Cause, have without scruple called it.

He gives this Reason, why Sacrifice is to be offered to God only: *Because a sacrifice is established to make a publick acknowledgment and a solemn profession of Gods Sovereignty and our absolute dependance.* But when he should give a proportionable Reason, why his Church renders to the B. Virgin and to the Saints, the Honor of Praying to them, which is one instance he presently names; he slips it over and pretends no more, then that *all Religious Worship ought to terminate in God, as its necessary end, and if it may be called Religious 'tis because of its necessary Relation to him.* Now he should have said, *Prayer is established to make a publick Acknowledgment, and solenin Protestation, as well of the Power and Excellency of the B. Virgin and the Saints, as of the perfection of God.* But though the nature of his discourse required some such reason, yet the nature of his Design would not bear it, which was to remove the *frightful Ideas* of his Religion, which we have entertained, and to represent it in a more agreeable and pleasing Form, than we have yet known it by.

Other Observations of this kind might be made, to make it probable, that it cost even M. de M. some little trouble to contrive his discourse into this plausible Appearance, and to shew that 'tis no easie matter, at the same time to make a smooth Representation of their Religion and not to change it. But I shall now offer my Reasons, to shew the Unsatisfactoriness of his Exposition in this cause, as he hath formed it.

M. de Meaux's distinction of Religious Worship.

1. Setting aside their Profession of *one God*, which is supposed in the Question concerning his particular Worship: I find no outward Mark, of the Adoration that is due to God only, mentioned, but that of *Sacrifice*, which indeed M. de M. sayes is *the principal*. But in a point of this consequence, I wish he had been pleased to name the rest. But I think I may appeal to the Sincerity of M. de Meaux, whether by Sacrifice he means any thing more than the *Sacrifice of the Mass*, in which t'ey pretend to offer up *Jesus Christ*, the Son of God his natural Body Soul and Divinity, as a Propitiation for the Quick and the Dead: For my part I cannot find, but they give all other outward marks of Adoration to the B. Virgin but this; so that the Worship given to God, and that to her are distinguished I fear but by one mark. And what a rare Account is this of Gods incommunicable Worship, if that mark too should prove to be one of their own Inventions; if such a sacrifice as that, was not appointed by God; if indeed it be repugnant to the plain Authority of the Scripture; as the *exposition* of our Doctrine hath irrefragably shewn in a very little Compass! This is my first Exception, That all the outward marks of Religious Worship, which God hath established, they make common to God and the Saints; and that which they give to God only, they have made themselves.

2. Even this very Sacrifice of the *Mass*, is offered up by them, in honour of the B. Virgin and the Saints. For thus the Oblation runs in their Missals. *Accept, O Holy Trinity, this Oblation which we offer to thee, in honor of the most glorious Virgin, the Mother of God, &c.* Now surely they would not offer God himself in Sacrifice to a Creature. But it comes something near it, to offer up such a Sacrifice in honor of a Creature. For while this is done, how can it be said, that Sacrifice is reserved to be a *Protestation* of that Honor, which is *due to God only*.

3. They

3. They *burn Incense* to the *B. Virgin* and the *Saints*, which being done as a Religious Rite in their Honor, will hardly avoid being a Sacrifice. For though this Rite of burning Incense, was no part of the Religion that *Jesus* or his *Apostles* taught, nor used at all in the *Antient Church*; yet it should seem to be no less a Sacrifice now, then it was among the *Jews*, or then it would have been, if it had been transferred from the *Synagogue* into the *Church*. I suppose, if the *Church of Rome* had thought fit, to introduce the Oblations of *Beasts* and *Birds* into her Religious Worship; she could not deny, but such Oblations had been properly Sacrifices, and were to be made to God only: And that though it were *Judaism* to offer them at all; it were yet *Idoltry* to offer them to any but to God. But what should make any such difference, between *Slaying of Victims*, and *burning of Incense*; that the former should belong to God only, and not the latter, I cannot comprehend. For the *Altar of incense* was most holy unto the Lord; it was overlaid with Gold, which the *Altar of Burnt-Offerings* was not; and it was more holy then the *Altar of burnt-Offerings*, as standing in the more Holy place; and none but the *Seed of Aaron* was to come near to offer incense before the Lord. No wonder therefore, that *Hezekiah* brake in pieces the *Brasen Serpent*, when they burned Incense to it; for this was no less than offering Sacrifice to it. To conclude, the *Idoltry* which the *Heathens* sought to bring the *Christians* to, was no other then to take a little Incense in their hands, and throw it into the Fire of their Altars. But yet they burn Incense to the *Images* and *Reliques* of the *B. Virgin* and the *Saints*: And then how can they pretend to sacrifice to God only? But,

4. Setting all this aside, let us consider, that they grant Sacrifice is to be offered to God only, because it is established to make a publick Acknowledgment, and a Solemn

Prayer, a Protestation of God's Sovereignty

Protestation of Gods Sovereignty, and of our absolute Dependence. Now if this be true, then whatsoever is established for the same purpose, is *holy to the Lord* also. And therefore Religious Invocation by Prayers for good things, by Confessions of Sin, by vows of Repentance and Duty, and by Thanksgivings for benefits received, is to be offered to God only. For in truth, these are *acknowledgments and Protestations of Gods Sovereignty, and of our absolute Dependence.* Nay in truth, they are more noble and excellent Sacrifices, than those *Victims* and other more sensible Oblations, which God required under the Law, or before it, and which he does not require now. But that which I lay the greatest stress upon is this, That those material Sacrifices, were so many Rites and Ceremonies of *Invocation*, diversified according to the several ends of Invocation, either for confessing of Sin, or obtaining a benefit, or returning Praises for Benefits received. Hence it is, that *Prayer and Sacrifice* are put one for the other in the Holy Scriptures as when it is said ; *The Sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the Prayer of the upright is his delight* : By which words it is plain, that the Sacrifice of the Wicked, is his Prayer, and the Prayer of the upright is his Sacrifice. Now Prayer, and Sacrifice strictly so called, were both Acts of Worship ; but Prayer more excellent than Sacrifice, because Sacrifice was the Rite of Prayer, and a Rite which God required no longer, than till that most precious Sacrifice of the Son of God was offered for us ; the Merit of which alone it is, that made the Prayers of good men in all ages acceptable to God.

And by the way, it would be considered by the Gentlemen of the Church of *Rome*, That when those imperfect Sacrifices, which prefigured the oblation of *Jesus Christ* once for all, were offered under the Law ; the Prayers of Gods People were then made only to God. And therefore now that

that the Prayers of the Church are sanctified, by the accomplishment of the Sacrifice of the Son of God, to offer any of them to a Creature, is rather a greater Dishonour to God than, it would have been before. For if the *Patriarchs* and the *Jews* were to pray to him only, to whom alone they offered Sacrifice, *i. e.* to God ; much more shall the Sacrifice of the Son of God, which hath been actually offered for us, infer our Obligation to make all our Prayers and Religious Invocations to God only, to whom we have Access by the merit of that Sacrifice.

But this I insist upon, That if we compare the legal Sacrifices, with the Prayers of Gods People under the Law, these were no less *Protestations of Gods Sovereignty and man's absolute dependence* then those were ; and that the *House of God*, was no less denominated by a Service peculiar to him, in being called an *House of Prayer*, then if it had been called an *House of Sacrifice*, as it was an House of Sacrifice too. A House of Sacrifice to the *Jewes*, and a House of Prayer to all *Nations*.

Now, if these more Spriritual and reasonable Sacrifices of a Penitent and broken Heart, a believing and humble Heart, a devout and thankful Heart offered in Religious Invocation, are such *Acknowledgments* as M. de M. speaks of; then are they not to be offered to the B. Virgin and the Saints, but to God only. And what now is it that M. de M. means, by *terminating the Honour they render to the B. V. upon God* ? Is it this, That the Honour done to her, by Invocating her with Prayers, Hymns, Confessions of Sin, Vows, and Devoting themselves to her Service, is all intended by the Church for the Honor of God ? I would then know, why any Sacrifice may not also be offered directly to the Virgin, the Church intending, that the Honor of it should terminate upon God, and believing that he has all the Honor of it at last. No, say they, *Sacrifice is established*.

The Jealousie of God is provoked.

Ilisbed to make a publick acknowledgement of Gods Sovereignty. But then I add, that Religious Invocation is established to make such an Acknowledgment too. So that if Terminating Religious Worship upon God, will warrant giving it to the B. Virgin, and the Saints, their Church may give to them that Worship of *the more sensible Sacrifices*, which yet they pretend to deny. And if no Worship is to be given to the Saints, which is established to make a Solemn Acknowledgment of Gods Sovereignty, and our dependance, they must deny to the B. V. and to the Saints, *that more Spiritual Worship* of Prayers, Hymns, and Vows, which they give. Nor will they ever be able to avoid these difficulties, but by coming out of the Clouds, and confessing according to the plainness and the simplicity of the Scriptures, That all Religious Worship is due to God, and to him only, inasmuch as *Religious Worship* is established to make an Acknowledgment of Gods Sovereignty, and our absolute Dependence: And *publick Acts of Religious Worship*, to make publick and solemn Acknowledgments thereof.

§. 6.

Thus I have considered the Defence, that M. de M. has made of the Worship of the B. V. and the Saints, as it is practised in the Church of *Rom*: ; and I promise my self, that whoever shall seriously consider what has been said, will not be encouraged, by the *Exposition* of this Practice, to venture upon it. I know that many of the R. Church, fortifie themselves, against all our Arguments upon these Points, by this Perswasion: That so long as they do not make Gods of the Saints, but believe and profess, that there is but one God, infinite in all Perfections; all the Honors they give to the B. Virgin and the Saints, are to be interpreted by this Protestation: That they have no other God,

God, but the Creator of the World, nor Lord, but the Saviour of mankind. But if they in this manner assure themselves, and would encourage others: I beseech them to consider, and would to God, they would all consider but this one thing: That if the Sin of Idolatry could not take place, where there is such a Profession, and such a Faith in one God (though I more than fear the contrary;) yet the *Saint-Worship* of the *Roman Church*, does approach to very near it, and is so very like it, that even this, (if no more were to be said) should be a sufficient Reason to deter us from *It*. A Woman that is faithful to her Husband, will not only forbear doing the utmost Injury to him, by giving his Bed to another; but she will avoid all those Familiarities and Caresses with any other man, which are scandalous, which lead to the last Treachery, and which would provoke her Husband's Jealousie. Now God has described his peoples Relation to him, by the Relation of a Wife to her Husband, not only in the *Old Testament*, but in the *New*; from whence it is, that the Worship of other Gods is called Fornication, Whoredom and Adultery. Thus God charged the *Jews*, for *inflaming themselves with Idols*, *Isa. 57. 5. 7.* *under every green Tree, and setting up their Beds upon every lofty and high Mountain, and enlarging their Bed,* because they had many Idols. Thus it was said of *Israel*, *Jerem. 3. 6. 9.* *that she had through the Lightness of her Whoredoms, defiled the Land, and committed Adultery with Stocks and Stones.* This is the Language of the whole *16th. Chap. of Ezek.* where God threaten'd to judge the *Jews*, as Women that break Wedlock are judged, and would give them their Reward in Fury.

Now supposing, that there were no other Idolatry in the Nature of the thing, no other spiritual Whoredom and Fornication, but Worshipping that for God, which is not God; and that if we do but make this difference, between

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tween the Worship that we give to God, and that which we give to his Courtiers and Favorites, that still we Acknowledge them to be Creatures, and not *Gods*, Servants, and not *Lords*; and so do not give them that last and distinguishing Honor, which to give would, by the Confession of all, be spiritual Adultery in the highest degree: Supposing this, I say; yet let us in the Name of God consider, that to give Religious Worship to Creatures, as well as to God; to fall down to Images, as well as to God; and to give almost quite throughout the same outward Expressions of Honor, of Faith, of Love, of Religious Expectation and Dependence to the B. V. and to Saints and Angels, which we give to God; if it be not downright whoredom, is yet a whorish Behaviour, and more than sufficient to provoke the Lord to Jealousie. I cannot but speak in the Language of the Scripture, upon an Argument that the Scriptures so largely treat of in this Language.

It is worthy of much Observation, that God gives this very Reason, why he prohibited the Worshipping of Images: *For I the Lord thy God, am a jealous God.* And that we might not think it a light matter, to provoke his Jealousie; he adds, *and I visit the Sins of the Fathers, upon the Children to the third and fourth Generation of them that hate me.* I know who they are, that would fain believe the Worship of no other Images, but those of the Gods of the *Gentiles*, to be forbidden in the second Commandment. But I must needs say, upon this Occasion, that if that had been the only design of that Commandment; it is very strange, that God should note the Worshipping of the Heathen Gods, with no other penalty, than that which his *Jealousie* would inflict: For to have any other *Gods* besides him, is without all question, spiritual Whoredom; and had been threatned with Divorce, if the Prohibition of so great a Crime, had needed the of Sanction of any

any express Threatning. But when he threatens the Worship of Images, with the Effects of his Jealousie: it seems plain, that he means such Image-Worship, as is consistent with acknowledging him to be our Only God. And yet this is the least of all those Reasons, by which it appears to me, that he forbids in this Commandment, the Worship of all Images whatsoever. I deny not therefore, but a man may kneel, may kiss, may incense, may prostrate himself, and pray before an Image; and all this while ascribe no Divinity to it, nor take it to be his God. So likewise he may Pray, and make Vows, and offer Thanks and Prayes to the Saints, and to the B. Virgin, and not take them neither for his Gods. But because God is the peerless Majesty of Heaven and Earth, he will be served with a peerless Worship; he will therefore have no such things as these done in Religion, nor Creatures to have Respect shewn them, that look so like to the Worship which he requires himself. Why do I say, *so like*? That which they give to the B.V. and to the Saints, is almost the very same. But if we do such things as these, it will not serve our turn, to plead, That we still keep the inward Adoration of Spirit and Truth intirely for him, though we thus honor his Creatures with Religious Rites, and Services; any more than it would excuse a Woman, that had given all the Favors and Liberty to another Man, that could provoke her Husband's Jealousie, to say, (though she could say it with Truth,) that she remembered all the while who was her Husband, and whatever Liberties besides she used, that she had still kept his Bed undefiled.

This Consideration I could not forbear to use; and that in Compassion to those, whose Prejudices will not let them feel the Sense of those Reasonings, by which we prove the *Roman Church* to be guilty of downright Idolatry. For if the fear of God's *Jealousie*, would keep them from giving those

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those Honors to the Saints, which look so like Divine Honours, if they are not so;—we should gain our end upon them, though not by the force of the best arguing the Case will bear: And this is our End, That God may not be any more dishonour'd, and their Salvation hindred, by the unchristian Doctrines and Practices of this sort. I have therefore now proceeded upon this Supposition, that they are not guilty of perfect Idolatry, in those things which we complain of, and yet shewn what urgent Cause there is upon another Account, for a Reformation of them. But I conclude this, with professing, That I have supposed them not guilty of that fearful Crime, only to make way for another Argument, since all Arguments are to be used in so important a Matter, that have a Foundation of Truth; but not in distrust of those Arguments, which prove them guilty of it.

§. 7.

The second thing I propounded was, to shew the beginnings of this strange Worship amongst Christians, which they offer in the Church of *Rome* to the B. Virgin, and to the Saints. For I must not forget, that M. de Meaux pretends, that his Church in these things teaches as the *Primitive Church* taught, and that she does what she teaches with all *Antiquity*.

But what if nothing of all this, was either Taught or done in the Church for 360 years after *Christ*? M. de M. says, that those of the Pretended Reformation (obliged by the strength of Truth) begin to acknowledge, that the custom of Praying to Saints, and honoring their Reliques, was Established even in the fourth Age of the Church. This he takes all occasions to insinuate; and with these colours he serves himself to represent the Reformation as odiously as he can devise.

devise. Thus he tells us in his *Pastoral Letter*; But above all what horror are they worthy of, who cast the Accusation [of Idolatry] upon the whole Church, and also on the Church of the first Ages? Where he takes it for granted, that the Honour and Innocence of the first Ages must stand or fall with the Cause of the Roman Church; and so takes occasion to accuse us of a great and fearful Crime, viz. That we cast the accusation of Idolatry upon the whole Church, even the Church of the first Ages: He had observed but just before, that those who bear false and scandalous Witness against an Innocent Person, are Condemned to the same punishment which the Crime of which they bear Witness, did deserve, had it been found true. And therefore we deserve before men, the Horror which is due to Idolatry, and shall receive the just punishment thereof in the sight of God. If this Rule be true, and we must incur the Penalties of Idolatry, if we falsely accuse others of it; M. de Meaux ought to reflect upon himself; who having accused us of falsely accusing the First Ages in this matter, supports his Accusation by taking these two things for granted: First, that we acknowledge the Illustrious Fourth Age to have requested the Prayers of Martyrs, and honored Reliques; as the pretended Catholics have done since: Secondly, that the Fourth Age being granted them, the first Three must be theirs in course. If M. de Meaux be safe upon these Grounds; we have no great cause to apprehend the Horrors and Punishments of false Accusation. And if this be all he hath to say, 'tis but a very slender ground for an Appeal to the Primitive Church, and to all Antiquity. For neither have the Reformed acknowledged heretofore, nor do they now begin to acknowledge, that the Customs of the Roman Church in these points, were established in the Fourth Age of the Church. Nor if they did acknowledge it, would this Acknowledgment give away the Primitive Church, and all Antiquity,

Past. l. p. 29.

Ibid.

Id. p. 8.

Antiquity in favour of Praying to Saints, and worshipping of Images and Reliques; unless the first three Ages were less *Antient* and *Primitive*, than those that followed.

That which we acknowledge, is not that *Saint-Worship* was *Estallish'd* in the *Fourth* Age; but this, that towards the latter end of the *Fourth* Age, some unhappy occasions were given, for the *Establisshing* of that *Worship* in after Ages; which we could wish had never been given, and which the *Great Men* of those *Dayes* (we have reason to believe) would have prevented, if they had been *Prophets*, as well as *holy Men*, and foreseen the *Mischiefs*, into which they were ripened, by the *Superstition* of after-times.

I shall therefore demonstrate, that 'tis a vain thing for the pretended *Catholicks* to presume, that they have the *Authority* of the three *First* Ages, for the worship of *Saints* *Images* and *Reliques*, upon supposition that the *Doctors*, towards the close of the *Fourth* Age, were theirs in these *Points*. And then I shall not fear, to give the truest Account I can, of those *Practices* at that time, which grew afterward into the *Superstitions* we now complain of.

Monsieur de Meaux says, *It will not appear very likely that M. Daille should understand the sentiments of the Fathers of the three first Ages, better than those who gathered, as I may say, the Succession of their Doctrine after their deaths.* These *Gentlemen*, I perceive, will content themselves with any pretence, to shift off the *Trial* of their *Doctrines* and *Practices*, by the *Authority* of the three *First* Ages. For whether that be *likely*, or not which *M. de Meaux* here puts; yet I hope we may look into the *Writings* of the most *Primitive* *Fathers*, to see how things went in their times. And it is very likely that *M. Daille* might understand the *sentiments* of the *Fathers* of the *Three* first *Ages*, as well as he understood the *Sentiments* of those of the *Fourth*. And so long as we can have recourse to the
undoubted

undoubted Writings of the three first Ages, we may get the Doctrine of those Fathers this way, with a little more Assurance, then by guessing what their Sentiments were, from the Books of their Successors: Which every reasonable Man must acknowledge, unless it be reasonable to suppose that the Fathers of the Three first Ages, did not understand their own Sentiments, so well as the Fathers of the Fourth understood them.

Now in the first place, the profound Silence of the three first Ages, and the better half of the Fourth, as to the Worship of the B. *Virgin* and the *Saints*, and their *Images* and *Reliques*, should be enough to determine the first Point in question. And this Silence is not only directly confessed by some of our Adversaries, but as effectually confessed by the rest, that labor to find some hints of these Practices in these primitive Fathers; but by such Interpretations and Consequences, that 'tis almost as great a shame to confute, as to make them. Now the Silence of these Fathers ought not to be rejected, as an incompetent Proof, because it is but a Negative. For since we pretend, that these Practices are Innovations and were never heard of in the Ancient Church: It is not reasonable to demand a better Proof of it, than that in their Books, some of which give large and particular Accounts of their Worship, and of their Doctrines concerning Worship, we can no where meet with the least Intimation or Footstep of them. Would our Adversaries have us bring express Testimonies out of the Fathers against these things, as if they wrote and disputed by the Spirit of Prophecy, against those Corruptions that should arise, several Ages after they were dead? We have, as I shall shew, other ways of discovering their Sentiments, besides this, that they make not the least mention of these Services. But to demand more than their perpetual Silence in these Cases, is unreasonable; because no satisfactory

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ry Account can be given of it, but this, That the Worship we speak of, was indeed no part of their Religion. Had it been some indifferent Rite or Ceremony, that we contend about; this Argument from the Silence of the Fathers, against its Antiquity, might with some Colour be rejected; because it were unreasonable to expect, that they should take notice in their Writings, of every Custom of how little moment soever. And yet we find, that in matters even of this slight nature in comparison, they have not been wanting, to give us very much Information. But it is altogether incredible, that so notable and famous a Part of the the Worship of Christians, as that which is now given to the *B. Virgin*, and to the *Saints*, should not be mentioned by any one of them, if it had been the Custom of those times. *Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tertullian, Minutius Felix*, all the *Apologists*, or at least one of them, would have taken some notice of it; especially, since this part of their Religion, would have needed Exposition and Defence, more than all the rest; for it would have made them obnoxious to the Recriminations of the Heathens; and brought all their own Arguments upon themselves, which they had used against the Heathens, in Defence of their own Worshipping the one God, and him only.

But perhaps they all agreed to conceal this *Saint-Worship* from the Heathens, for the same Reason why *Salmeron* thinks, the Apostles and Evangelists concealed it at first from both *Jews and Gentiles*, because, forsooth, it had been hard to require it of the *Jews* (who had been taught to pray to God only, and to Worship none but him) and by publishing it, Occasion had been given to the *Gentiles* to think, that many Gods were now offered them, instead of that multitude of Gods which they had forsaken. A very likely Reason, thus far; That if this had been the Doctrine of the Church, it was highly necessary to keep it secret, till Heathen Idolatry

*Salmer. in 1
Tim. 2. Disp. 8.*

latory were extinguished; and none should be left to upbraid the Christians, with removing the old Gods of the Heathens, to make way for new ones of their own. And without all doubt, those that were prevail'd upon in every Persecution, by Force and Flattery, to revolt from Christianity; though they had been false to the rest of their Religion, yet were true to this Secret of it; and never discovered to the Heathens, that (whatever the Church pretended,) they had been taught to say *Ave Marias* to the B. Virgin, and to Worship her, and the dead Saints and Martyrs, with *Prayers* and *Hymns*, &c. I thank this *Jesuit* however, for confessing so manifest a Truth, that this Adoration of Saints was not fit to be exposed to the *Gentiles*. But if Matters were carried thus, I think they were not carried with great Sincerity. This might be like the Policy of *Jesuits*; but it did not by any means become the Simplicity of *Christians*. And yet I think, a *Jesuit* would hardly have carried a Secret in his Sleeve, so dangerous to be discovered; and so impossible to be concealed. For that the Church should have the good Fortune, to conceal it for above 300 Years, from the Idolatrous Philosophers, and Priests of the *Gentiles*, was of all other things, that passed in that long time, the most miraculous; and requires such a Faith to believe it, as believes a thing the more, the more incredible it is. But though this, in the Opinion of all indifferent persons, will be a sufficient Prejudice against supposing, that the Church kept her Doctrine and Practice from the Knowledge of her Enemies; Yet I believe it will be a stronger Prejudice against it, amongst those (of which number I profess my self to be one) that honor the Memories of the Ancient Martyrs, and love them for their Constancy to the Death, in adhering to our dear Lord and Master *Jesus*; that this crafty Design, is no way reconcileable to that Spirit of Integrity, which the Gospel frames us to, if

if we are True *Christians*; and of which they, if any, were undeniable *Examples*. One would think therefore, that if the *Heathens* knew no such *Doctrines* and *Practices* amongst the *Christians*, that the *Christians* had none such to be known. And in the Opinion of *Salmeron* himself; had those known any such thing, these had not failed to have heard of it. Why then did they not charge the *Christians* with Worshipping the B. Virgin, when nothing would have been more pertinent and apposite? I will give one Instance of this Question, so clear and full, that it shall render all others needless. There was nothing that *Celsus* insisted upon, against the *Christians* Worshipping *Jesus Christ*, with more Spite and Triumph, then that *Jesus* was, as he called him, *a most vile Person*; Taken, Beaten and Crucified. It was for this he scorned the *Christians*, that they should count him the *Son of God*; and *Worship him now dead*, who lived and died ignominiously. It must be uneasie to a Christian, to write or to read his *Blasphemies* upon this Occasion. But there is one place that I must not forbear; and that is, Where the foresaid Wretch, brings in a *Jew*, and with the *Jew*, does himself upbraid *Jesus*, That he was Born in a little Town of *Judæa*, and that of a wandering Woman, miserably poor, that span for her living; who was also for *Adultery* thrown out of doors, by the Carpenter her Husband; and being thus driven away by him, and wandering up and down in a base fashion, brought forth *Jesus* in a Corner. Thus did that accursed Villain, blaspheme the Blessed Virgin, in despite to *Jesus* her most Holy Son; I say in despite to him, because he was worshipped by the *Christians*. By bringing forth the Execrable Stories of the *Jews* concerning the Mother, the Impious Infidel designed to make the Church of God ashamed of Worshipping her Son; whom he sought to disparage this way, as well as by objecting the Poverty of his Life, and the Ignominy

Orig. contra
Cels. lib. 2. 3.

Ibid. lib. 7. 8.

Orig. lib. 1.
Cont. Cel.

An Argument that the B. V. was not then Worshipped.

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of his Death. But suppose, I beseech you, that the Church in those days had honored the Mother of *Jesus*, little less than *Jesus himself*; that she had been called the *Queen of Heaven*; that the Story of her *Assumption* had been then invented; that she had been Worshipped as the *Lady of the World*, and served with Prayers, and Vows, and Incense, and with all, or with any of those Religious Rites, that she is now served with: would that spiteful Wretch, have failed to reproach the enemies of his Gods with so plain a matter of Reproach? Did he think they had reason, to be ashamed of making so helpless and so *unfortunate* a man, as the Pagans took *Jesus* to be, the object of a *most excellent Worship*; and would he not have thought it a greater shame, if they had given a *superexcellent* worship, to so helpless and so *scandalous* a woman, as the false Miscreant reckoned the Mother to be? Did they insult over the Christians for making a God of the *Son* of such a *Mother*? What would they have said, if the Church had given then the least occasion to suspect, that it had made a Goddess of the Mother her self? But of this not one word is to be met with, in all the Reproaches of the Infidel; no nor of *Trypho* or *Cæcilius*, or any of the most bitter enemies of the Christian names, for the three first Ages; where it lay as fair to be taken up, as Argument and Occasion could make it. What Account then is to be given of this Omission? It was no Omission of theirs at all; The Church had not yet given them this Handle against it self: No such things as these were known amongst *Christians*, and therefore, their Enemies did not lay them to their Charge: Their Enemies, I say, who falsely accused them, as to other matters, upon the most slight and frivolous Occasions. They accused them of Worshipping an *Asses* Head; of killing a *Child* at their Solemn Assemblies; and of *Adultery* and *Incest*, as you may see in *Minutius*

Ibid. Lib. 8.

What was said of the B. Virgin,

Felix, and elsewhere; and all this upon the most ridiculous Grounds imaginable. But it seems the *Christians* paid Religious Worship to the *Virgin*, and to *dead Men* and *Women*; and their watchful Enemies were content to say never a word of it. Alas! these wise Men did not know, that the *Christians* derided them, for such things as these; perhaps they were always deaf, when it was told them, that the *Christians* did the same things themselves; or they had quite forgotten it, when it was most proper to remember it; or were so silly, as not to discern the Advantage they were to make of it; or so imprudent, as to accuse them of other things which could be easily disproved, rather than to accuse them of those things which could not be denied. *The Children of this World*, were now grown Fools in their Generation. He that can believe these things, let him believe them!

Cyrl. contra
Julian l. 6.
See Mr. Mede's
Apostacy of
the later
times.

I shall add this only, that when the least Occasions were once given, to suspect that the Martyrs were worshipped by the Church, the Heathens immediately laid hold on the Pretence, especially *Julian* and *Eunapius*, who urged the Accusation with all the stings of Malice; as their Predecessors in this Cause against *Christ*, would certainly have done, had there been the least Colour for it.

But to return to the Virgin *Mary*: We have seen that in these latter Ages, the Doctrine of her Worship is grown to be no mean part of the Body of Divinity, with the Doctors of the *Roman Church*. There is no end of writing Books in her Honor, and to excite and direct Devotion to her. A Sermon cannot be preached, but she must be addressed to with an *Ave Mary*: Nor a large Volume Written, but 'tis odds, that it is concluded with *Praise to God, and to the Virgin Mother Mary*. One would therefore expect, to find all things full of Veneration and Address to the B. Virgin, in the Writings of the Primitive Fathers, that is, to meet with it at every turn in their Expositions of the Faith, in their

their Exhortations to Devotion and Piety, and in all their Homilies to the people. But if you look for any such thing, I will be bold to say, you will lose your labour; unless it were some Satisfaction to find, that the World is very much altered from what it was, and the State of Religion not a little changed.

But the worst is, that what these Fathers say of her, is but very little in Comparison; and that not of set purpose, but incidentally and occasionally, as they were led to it by other things. I know not how the Fathers can be excused, but that the Scriptures speak, as sparingly of her, as they.

It were something however, if their occasional Passages concerning her, intimated a greater Regard to her Service in their Practice, than they have shewn in their Writings; or if they discovered but some obscure Prints and Footsteps of such a Devotion to her, as we seek for. Let us therefore see, after what manner they speak of the B. Virgin.

I observe, that the highest Strains in her Praise, run upon a Comparison between her and Eve. Thus *Justin Martyr*, who says very little else of her tells us, that Eve *Justin Dial. cam Tryph. p. 327. Paris.* being a Virgin conceived by the Word of the Serpent, and brought forth Death: But the Virgin Mary receiving the Message of the Angel, conceived in Faith, therefore that which was born of her was Holy, viz. the Son of God. He proves also against *Trypho*, that Christ was to be born of a Virgin, according to the Prophets. *p. 290.*

After *Justin* comes *Irenæus*, and with greater circumstance pursues the forementioned Comparison, against these stupid *Hereticks*, that denied God to be the Creator of all things, and that he used his own Works. For against these *Irenæus* amongst other Arguments, produced this, That Christ took Flesh of Mary. And then he proceeds to shew, how convenient it was, that he should be Born of a Virgin.

What was said of the B. Virgin,

First he opposes the *disobedience* in the case of the *Forbidden Tree*, by which Sin came into the World, to that *obedience* which was performed upon a *Tree*, by him that brought Life to the World. He opposes also the *Cheat* that was put upon *Eve*, to the *Truth* that was told *Mary*. He opposes the *Virgin Eve*, now *designed to be a Wife*, to the *Virgin Mary* who was also *espoused*; and the *Virgin Eve* deceived by an *evil Angel*, to the *Virgin Mary* believing a

The Word which I translate *Comforter*, is in Latin *Advocata*, from whence *Bellarmin* and *Fevardentius* conclude very absurdly in behalf of Invocation of Saints, tho *Irenæus* had meant, what we usually understand by *Advocate*. But by the fidelity of the Latin-Translator in keeping to the Ecclesiastical use of words, it seems evident, that the Greek word in *Irenæus* was *παρηγορητής*, which how it is to be Translated see *M. Duille*, who has largely treated this matter, and I doubt not to say, has made an end of it. *De Relig. Cultus Object.* p. 41. &c.

good Angel. And, sayes he, as *Eve* was seduced and forsook God, so *Mary* was induced to obey God, that the *Virgin Mary* might be a *Comforter* of the *Virgin Eve*: and that as *Mankind* was through a *Virgin* bound over to *Death*, so they should be released through a *Virgin*. One thing being thus rightly ballanced against another, the *disobedience* of a *Virgin*, by the

the *Obedience* of a *Virgin*. The sum of all is this, That there appeared a notable Congruity in divers respects, that as *Eve* a *Virgin* led the first man *Adam* into transgression, in whom all *Mankind* fell; so the *Virgin Mary* brought forth him into the World, the second *Adam*, the Lord from Heaven, who was to redeem all *Mankind*. No honest Man will go about to make less of these Passages, but he must be a very subtle man, that can make more of them.

And yet *Fevardentius* triumphs in this Testimony, as if he had found here the *Primitive Church*, and all *Antiquity*, for the Invocation of the B. Virgin. And no less satisfied he was, with a like strain of *Irenæus* against those Hereticks, in another place, who said, That *Christ* took nothing from the *Virgin Mary*, and by consequence that she was not really his Mother, nor he really, but only seemingly, a Man. Now amongst other things *Irenæus* argues the contrary, from the

the congruity of our Saviours being born of a *Virgin*, that a *Virgin* might bring as much good to the World, as a *Virgin* had done mischief; whereby it became plain, that God defeated the *Devil* in a congruous way, who by the *Virgin Eve* had seduced *Adam*, and brought death upon his Posterity. But why did not *Irenæus* complain, that this Heresy overthrew the very Foundation, upon which the Church gave a super-excellent Worship to *Mary*, viz. because she was the Mother of God? nay, why did not he silence this wild Conceit, by alledging the Worship which she every where received upon this account? *Feuardentius* elsewhere makes a mighty matter of *Irenæus* his pressing Hereticks with *Catholick Tradition*. Why therefore was not so obvious and convincing an Argument, as the *Catholick Tradition* and practice of worshipping the *Virgin Mary*, brought forth upon this occasion? Even because there was no such Tradition or Practice to be alledged, as any man that is not overruled with prejudice must confess. 'Tis a sign that ancient Testimonies run very low with them, when they are fain to make much of these.

But if *Irenæus* forgot this Argument, 'tis something strange that *Tertullian* after him should forget it too. For writing against the same stupid opinions, he uses just the Argument that *Irenæus* had done before him. *The Image and Similitude of God*, saith he being captivated by the *Devil*, God recovered it by * a Work that defeated the *Devil* in his own way. For the word that was a Foundation of Death had crept into *Eve*, being yet a *Virgin*, and agreeably by the word that should restore life, was to be received by a *Virgin*; that Mankind who by means of that Sex fell into Perdition, might through the same Sex be recovered to Salvation. *Eve* had believed the *Serpent*, *Mary* hath believed *Gabriel*. The Offence which the former hath committed in believing, the latter hath blotted out by believing. And what

* *zmula operatione.*
Tert. de carne Christi. c. 27.
Adv. Praxeam c. 27.

What was said of the B. Virgin,

what he means by *blotting out Eve's Offence*, is plain from what follows, that *Mary brought forth him who was to save even his Murderers*, and that *Christ was to come of her for the Salvation of Man*. What *Tertullian* says of her beside, is very little and by the bye; as that she was a *Virgin*, because *Christ was said to be made of a Woman*: And that being born of her, *he was therefore of the House of David*; and the like.

Clemens Alexandrinus, to illustrate a Moral Lesson, tells us, That *Mary* was a perfect *Virgin after the Birth of her Son*, and mentions a particular proof of it, which some affirm'd. And farther he says not, that I can remember.

S. rom. lib. 7.

His Scholar *Origen* acknowledged also the perpetual Virginity of *Mary*: And in his *Homilies* upon the first Chapter of *St. Luke*, where he could not avoid speaking of her, he hath these passages. *Some body*, says he, *I know not who, hath run into such a madness as to affirm that Mary was renounced by our Saviour, inasmuch as after his Birth, she was joynd to Joseph*. Now if the Church had then believed the Story of her *Assumption* (which hath been so poetically described to us of late :) If the Church had then, for an hundred and fifty years together served her as the *Queen of Heaven*, with solemn Rites of Worship: That man who ventured to disparage the *B. Virgin* in this fashion, was foolish to Admiration. But if *Origen* knew, that the Church had given her these Honors from the beginning; he wise was enough to have stopped this Madman's mouth with that Argument. or rather to have said nothing of him; since no body could need any instruction to hold him for a ridiculous Fellow.

*Contemp. pl. of
Life, &c.*

But he thought fit to instruct the people, how they should answer this man; and that in this manner: *If Mary was pronounced Blessed in those hymns that were uttered by the instinct of the holy Spirit; How can any man say, that our Saviour denied her.*

Origen

Origen speaks very honorably of the *B. Virgin*; but yet he represents her as an instance of humane Frailty; and one that needed Forgiveness of sins, as well as the Apostles: and that because she was offended, as he (it seems) was persuaded at the Passion of *Christ*. What, says he, do we think that when the Apostles were scandalized, that the Mother of our Lord was free from it? And so he interprets those words, *A Sword shall pierce through thy own Soul* also, by this paraphrase, *The Sword of unbelief shall pierce thy own Soul, and thou shalt be smitten with the edge of Doubtfulness*. I doubt it will not be convenient, to enquire of *Origen* any further.

As for *Athenagoras*, *Minutius Felix*, *St. Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, *Lactantius*; they have left us nothing at all concerning her; unless *St. Cyprian* says somewhere that *Christ* was conceived in the Womb of a *Virgin*, &c. But if that be all, I am sure he neglected some very inviting occasions of putting his People in mind of a great deal more; which he ought not to have neglected, if the Doctrine of the Primitive Church concerning the *B. Virgin*, had been the same with that of the pretended Catholick Church at this day.

And so we are gotten out of the three first Ages. But perhaps *Athanasius* makes amends for all that were before him, in the Sermon upon the Annuntiation of the Blessed Virgin. That Sermon I confess is a very surprising thing to any man, that considers there was not the least preparation for the Doctrine it would pretend to establish, in the foregoing Ages. But then this (as well as many other things, that go under the name of *Athanasius*) is none of his; as *Bellarmin*, and others of his party (*obliged by the Strength of Truth*) have actually confessed. And in all probability, it was written no less than 348 Years after his Death. In his genuine Works, there is more frequent mention of the Virgin, then in the Fathers before him; especially in his
Orations

The Sense of the Primitive Church.

Orations against the Arrians, which he wrote about the Year 360. But we must go further down, to find where her Worship began, for as yet there is no Appearance of it.

*Hilar. Pictav.
Com. in Matth.
P. 497.*

Hilary, who wrote about the same time, says nothing new in this Matter. He does industriously assert the Virginity of *Mary*, which, and the like things, were done by some of those that went before him. But of her Worship not a word.

Rev. 19. 10.

To conclude, the Fathers do generally speak of her, without the Addition of any Title of Honor. For the most part they call her *Mary*: sometimes the *Virgin*; the *Mother of our Lord* rarely, and the *mother of God* never, I think, till the Church was obliged to guard the belief of the Divine Nature of *Christ*, by all kind of proper Expressions. And even then, this honourable Appellation, was used not for her sake, but to secure the right Faith of our Lord's Divinity, especially against the *Nestorian* Heresie. In short, the Protestants do customarily mention the Virgin Mother, with honorable Additions, beyond what the Fathers of the Three First Ages did. But we *Worship* her just as they did,

** Luke 2. 49.
Ch. 11. 27, 28.
Job. 2. 4.*

that is, not at all. For my own part, when I consider that she had the Glorious Priviledge to be the *Mother of God*, I should have much ado to forbear regretting the little Regard wherewith some of the Fathers speak of her sometimes, but that I find our Saviour himself, in those * three Sayings concerning her, which are reported in the Gospels, not to Magnify her over greatly. And the Truth is, I should have wondred at that too, had not the excess of later Devotion to her put me in mind, that the H. Writers were guided by a Spirit of *Prophecy*, and have therefore recorded nothing that *Christ* said to his most H. Mother, but what might be of use in such times as these.

§. 8.

Let us now see whether the Religion of *Praying to Martyrs and Saints*, and *Worshipping their Images and Reliques*, has the Authority of the *Primitive Church* and *all Antiquity*. It may very well be presumed, that it has not, unless we think that the Fathers preferred the other Saints before the B. Virgin. But to say the Truth; tho hitherto the Virgin and the rest of the Saints were equal, as to any Religious Worship, neither the nor they being yet thought of for that purpose; yet when Superstition at length began to creep into the Church, the Martyrs got the start of the Virgin. In process of time her Worship overtopped theirs; but theirs began before her turn came. The most holy Religion of the Gospel was delivered all at once; and, which is most considerable, it is the Religion which God hath sealed, and so it was, and is all of a piece. But the Corruption of that Religion coming on by degrees, as contingent Occasions gave Birth and Growth to it, could not be regularly contrived, but would need a great deal of patching and mending, to bring it to a Face of Uniformity.

As for Praying to Saints; I know not how any Man can imagin, that the Primitive Fathers taught or used it, who considers in what Terms they taught that God only was to be Invoked: That they counted the Worship of *Invocation*, a better Sacrifice than those which had been offered to God, as the Law of *Moses* required, and which all acknowledge were to be offered to God only; and that they argued the Divinity of *Christ*, from hence that Prayers were to be offered to him.

Irenæus tells us, that the Church did nothing by *Invocations of Angels*, or *Incantations to them*, or any other evil Curiosity. *Fevardentius* pretends, that this

excludes *evil* Spirits only from being invoked. But *Iren. lib. 2. c. 57.* let any unprejudiced Man judge by what follows. *But* says he, *she directs her Prayers chastly, purely, and manifestly to the Lord that made all things.* Now according to *Fevardentius* he should have added, *and to good Spirits also.* For 'tis a vain thing to say, that he intended to oppose those only that Worshipped malicious Spirits; since if this had been his Intention, the plain laws of Discourse had obliged him rather to omit the *Worship of God* in this opposition, than the *Worship of good Spirits.* And doubtless upon this supposition, he would have said, *that we do not use Prayers and Hymns to evil, but to good Spirits.*

I cannot but set down here the words of the Church of *Smyrna* in their Golden Epistle, concerning the Martyrdom of *Polycarp.* It seems the *Jews* had suggested, that if the *Christians* could gain his Body, they would perhaps forsake *Christ*, and Worship him, (their Love and Reverence of that holy Man, their Bishop, was so well known:) Against which suggestion the *Smyrnians* thus declare themselves. *These men know not that we can neither forsake Christ, who suffered for the Salvation of all that are saved, the Innocent for the Guilty; nor Worship any other. Him truly being the Son of God, we adore: But the Martyrs and Disciples and Followers of the Lord, we justly love, for that extraordinary good mind, which they have expressed toward their King and Master; of whose happiness God grant, that we may partake, and that we may learn by their Examples.* This Testimony of the Church of *Smyrna* I rather produce in this place; because in two Ancient Manuscripts cited by the most learned Arch. B. *Usher*, the Latin Translation of their Protestation runs thus. *We Christians can never forsake Christ, who vouchsafed to suffer so great things for our sins, nor give away the Worship of Prayer to any other.*

See *Ass. usser.*
Pollic. or Answ.
as the Jesuits
challenge? Pra-
ing to Saints.

Cle-

Concerning the Object of Prayer.

51

Clemens Alexandr. defines Prayer by its Relation to God, in which (as (a) *Beſarmin* acknowledges) he (a) ὁμιλία *προς τὸ θεόν.* was followed by divers Fathers in the Fourth Century. But nothing can be more plain, than this Paſſage of his. *Since there is but one good God, both We and Angels pray to him (b) alone; that thoſe good things (b) παρ' αὐτοῦ* may be given us, which we want, and thoſe continued *ὑμῖν.* which we have. If half ſo plain a Teſtimony could *Strom. l. 7. p. 721.* have been produced out of the genuine Writings of theſe Fathers, for praying to others beſides God, as theſe are for praying to God alone; I fear we ſhould have been counted very impudent, in our Appeals to the *Primitive Church*, and the beſt Antiquity. The ſame Perſon had ſaid not long before, *We do juſtly honor God by Prayer, and with Righteouſneſs we ſend up this beſt and moſt Holy Sacrifice.*

And I find this to have been another general Notion of the Worſhip of Prayer amongſt the Ancients, that it was a Sacrifice much better, than thoſe more ſenſible Sacrifices, that were either offered by the *Gentiles*, or required by the Law of *Moſes*; and more pleaſing to God. Thus ſays *Tertullian*; *We ſacrifice for the Health and Safety of the Emperor, but we do it to our God, and his God; and we do it, as God hath commanded, with (c) pure Prayer, or purely with Prayer: (c) pura prece.* for ſo he is to be underſtood, in as much as he opposeth the Purity of Prayer, to the (d) Sacrifices of *In- (d) Odoris aut* ſenſe and *Victims*. And therefore, ſays he, *We pray ſanguinis.* rather for the Health of the Emperor, deſiring it of *Tert. ad Scap. c. 2.* him who can give it. This ſmart Writer, did in his way, very plainly repreſent our Doctrine in the fore-mentioned Saying. *We ſacrifice*, ſays he, *but to our God, and his God.* There he repreſents Sacrifice, as due to God only: *But we do it, as God hath commanded, with pure Prayer.* There he repreſents Prayer as

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a Sacrifice more Excellent, than that of *Odors* and *Blood*, which the *Gentiles* offered. And can any thing be more evident, than that he appropriates this Sacrifice so to God, that it ought not to be given to any else? Thus also he proves against the *Jews*, That we must now sacrifice to God, not earthly, but spiritual Sacrifices; for 'tis written, *A contrite Heart, and an humble Heart, is a Sacrifice to God*; and elsewhere *Offer the Sacrifice of Praise, and pay thy Vows to the most High*. And therefore, a little after he affirms *Christ* to be the *High Priest of eternal Sacrifices*, in Opposition to those that are abolished. Nay, he says that the pure Offering, (e) foretold in *Malachy*, which all Nations should bring, is the *Simplicity of Prayer from the pure Conscience*, which he elsewhere describes by *Blessing, and Praise, and Hymns*; and so is the same with *Pure Prayer* mentioned before. This is enough to shew, that in his days, the Church would no more have offered *Invocations of Prayer or Praise* to any but to God; then they would have offered *Victims* to any but to him, if they had been continued in the Service of the Church.

And by this we may see, in what sort we are to understand that Offering for the Martyrs, which we read of in *Tertullian* and *St. Cyprian*. Says *Tertullian*, *We make Oblations for them that are departed, in Memory of their Birth-days, i. e. of the Days wherein they were crowned with Martyrdom*. And thus *St. Cyprian* writing to the Church of *Carthage*, concerning *Celerinus*, and making mention of his Uncles *Laurentinus* and *Ignatius* says, *We offer Sacrifice for them, you may remember, as often as we celebrate the Days upon which the Martyrs suffered, with an Anniversary Commemoration*. And thus he writes to the Clergy of *Carthage*, concerning the Confessors, that should dye in

Ad. Jud. c. 5.

(e) Simplex oratio Adv. Mari. c. 1.

De Coronâ. c. 3.

De Exhort. c. 13.

Demen.

Cypr. Epist. 34.

Rig.

in Prison. Note down the days of their death, that we ^{Id. Epist. 37.} may Celebrate their Commemorations amongst the Memor-
ies of the Martyrs, &c. The meaning of which is,
that they gave Thanks, and offered Praises to God for
those holy Persons by name, who had constantly suf-
fered Death, for the Faith of Christ. These were
the Sacrifices they offered for the Martyrs, the *Sa-
rifices of Praise*; not excluding, what by other Autho-
rities is evident enough, the *Sacrifice of Prayers* for
them too, and for all the departed Saints, that they
might at length obtain the promised Resurrection. I
do not say, that the Worship of *Christians* consisted on-
ly of these Sacrifices. They had the *Oblation of Bread* See Mr. Mede
and *Wine* besides, before the *Eucharist*; and the *Re-* upon *Mincha*
presentative Sacrifice of our Lord's Body and Blood in *purum.*
the *Eucharist*. It is enough, that the Religious Invo-
cations of the Church, were held to be the Worship of
Sacrifice, and that of (f) a *more excellent Kind*, then (f) *Sacrificio-*
the *earthly Sacrifices* of Jews and Gentiles, as *Tertul-* rum officia po-
lian calls them. And let the *pretended Catholicks* tell *tima Adv.*
us, to whom the Worship of Sacrifice should be offered
but to God. They have, I confess, kept the *Stile* of
the Antient Church; and pretend to *Sacrifice* to God,
and to him only. But the Change which they have
made in the Doctrine and Practice of the Church, hath
obliged them to apply that *Stile*, otherwise than the
Antient Church did. When they speak of *offering*
Sacrifice, as Monsieur de *Meaux* does in his Exposition, *Exp. S. 3. 4.*
we are according to the use of that Phrase in their
Writers, to understand nothing but the pretended *Sa-*
cifice of the Mass. But why must not the people be
taught, that the Worship of Prayers and Hymns is a
Sacrifice too? For this was the current Doctrine of the
Primitive Church. There is a good Reason for it; be-
cause they do not pay this Worship to God alone, as
the Primitive Church did. And

See *Constit. A-*
postol. lib. 7.
c. 3.

(g) ὡς δὲ
προσφέρειν
θυσίας.

(h) Μονὴν ὅς
προστυκτέον
τῷ ἐπὶ πάντων
Θεῷ. *Orig. contr.*
Cels. lib. 8.

Orig. in Decim.
ad Rom. lib. 8.

Tert. de Orat:
cap. 1.

And now as for those passages, concerning *Oblations* and *Sacrifices* already produced, and many more to the like purpose, that might be produced out of the Fathers; I do not know how far a willing mind might go, to apply them to the *Sacrifice of the Mass*. And when that is done, it is but a little straining more, and they will interpret *Gregory Nazianzen* to their own mind too; who in his Funeral oration upon *St. Basil*, thus speaks of him. *And now he is in Heaven, (g) as I think he offers Sacrifices for us and Prayers for the People.* But I am confident *Nazianzen*, did not so much as think that *Basil* said *mass* in *Heaven* for him and the People.

To proceed, *Origen* is as exprefs to this purpose as his Master *Clemens Alex.* He saith we must pray to him (h) alone that is God over all, and we must pray to the word of God his only begotten, and the first-born of every Creature; and we must humbly beseech him, as our high Priest, to present our prayer (for it is known to him) to his Father and the Father of them that live according to the word of God.

This is enough for one man to say, in so plain a case. And yet I will add, what he says about this matter, from another common Argument, viz. that the Divinity of *Christ* is clearly gathered from our making prayers to him. For upon those words of the Apostle. *With all that call upon the Name of the Lord Jesus*, he saith, that the Apostle pronounces *Jesus Christ* to be God, in that his name is called upon; and that to call upon the name of the Lord, and to adore God, is one and the same thing. The Reason of this which I have ventured to offer is, That Prayer does ascribe, Omnipresence, as well as other divine Perfections, to the Being to which it is made. And this is that reason which *Tertullian*, as I think, hath expressed in these words: That Faith offers its Religion to him only, of whom it is confident that

that he sees and hears every where. For by Religion he meant Prayer, which is the Subject of that discourse to which these words belong. Thus Novatian also: *Nov. de Trin. c. 14.* If Christ be only a man, how is he every where present to those that call upon him; since this is not the nature of Man but of God to be present in all places! And in the same place, If Christ be only a Man, why is a Man invoked as a Mediator in prayers; since the Invocation of Man, must be judged ineffectual for the procuring of Salvation? And to name no more, Athanasius frequently uses this kind of Argument. For speaking of prayers, made to the Son of God, he says, *Athan. Orat. contra Arian. 2. 4.* the Saints do not think it just, to invoke him to be their Helper and Refuge, who was made or created. And no man would pray to receive any thing from the Fathers and the Angels, or from any of the other Creatures: from whence he concludes that because the Apostle in 1 Thess 3. 11. does not only pray to God the Father, but also to our Lord Jesus Christ, that therefore Christ is God. It seems it was not then the way of Christians to joyn God, and St. Michael, God and the Virgin, God and all the Saints, in Invocations of prayers. There were then no such things known, as Confession to God and to St. Michael, and to the Blessed Virgin, and to the Saints; as giving Glory to the Holy Trinity and to the Virgin; as saying Jesus Mary help. &c. had any thing of this Nature been done in those times. I doubt here had been a good Argument lost, by which the Fathers proved Christ to be God. Nor would Athanasius have been so meer a Child, as to attack the Arians with an Argument, to which the Doctrine and Practice of the Church, had afforded so obvious and effectual an Answer.

To all which I shall add but that Canon of the Laodicean Synod, that Christians ought not to forsake *Synod. Laod. cap. 35.* the

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the Church of God, and depart aside and Invoke Angels Therefore if any man be found using this secret Idolatry, let him be accursed, because he hath forsaken our Lord Jesus Christ. I make no question, but if there had been occasion Saints had been put into the Canon as well as Angels. But then what word could they have thought of, instead of *Saints*, to answer *Corners* [*Angulos*] which Crab thrust into the old *Latin* Translation instead of *Angels* [*Angelos*] is not very easy to imagine. Concerning which pleasant Forgery, see Bp *Ushers* Answer to the *Jesuits* Challenge. p. 469. &c.

Cypr. de Laps.
p. 177.

Tert. de Peni-
tentiâ. c. 9.

Apost. Constit.
lib. 7, 8.

And now if we consider, the Doctrine of these primitive Fathers concerning Prayer, I suppose we shall not wonder, that in those places where we might well have expected some instance of praying to Saints, or some Recommendation of it (if any such Practice had been amongst them) that I say there is nothing at all, no not the least intimation of it. Not where St. *Cyprian* so vehemently admonished those, that were fallen in persecution, to pray to God for themselves, and to intreat the *Brethren* to do so too : Not where *Tertullian* describes the Humiliations and Prostrations of the *Penitents* ; in both which places one would have expected, that the Intercession of the *Saints* and *Martyrs*, should have been implored : Not where *Justin Martyr* describes the *Service* of the Church in her Religious Assemblies ; nor in any of the ancient *Apologies*, nor in any ancient account of the Religious Worship of *Christians* ; no not in the *Apostolical Constitutions* (though a later work then it pretends to be) where the order of the Churches Service is very particularly described: We are not to wonder at it. I say for the declared Doctrine of the Church was against it.

§ 8.

As for the *Worshipping*, or as *M. de Meaux* calls it, the *Honouring* of Images, we might spare the pains of inquiring what the sence of the Ancient Church was concerning it; it is so hard to believe that they should worship the *Images* of the Saints, who did not so much as pray, or give any Religious Worship to the *Saints* themselves. But this practice is so far from having the Countenance of the *Primitive* Church, and *All* Antiquity; that in the best Ages, there were men of great name in the Church, that did not believe so much as the *Art* of *Imagery* and *Picture* lawful to be practised by a Christian. Saith *Clemens Alex.* We are plainly forbidden to meddle with that cheating *Art*: For the Prophet [Moses] saith, *Thou shalt not make the likeness of any thing either in Heaven or in Earth.* *Tertullian* hath a great deal to this purpose in his Discourse of *Idolatry*. But those words are, to my thinking, very remarkable. Well did the same God require the likeness of a *Serpent* to be made by an extraordinary Command, who by his Law forbad the making of any likeness. If thou observest the same God, thou hast his Law: Make no likeness. If also thou lookest to the Precept of making an Image afterward, do thou also imitate Moses: Make no Image whatsoever against the Law, unless God also command thee in particular so to do. Which words are so plain and full, that they leave no room for that frivolous pretence, that these Fathers intended no other Images, but those of the Heathen Gods. And that instance of the *Brazen Serpent*, which was no Idol, till the Jews made it one, clearly shews the contrary.

But if it be said that the Authority of these men is to go for nothing, because they were mistaken in condemning

Ibid. c. 2.

Canus, loc.
Theol. l. 5. c. 4.

Euseb. Hist.
lib. 7. c. 18.
Iren. l. 1. c. 24.

* Concerning
the Image of
the Syrophen-
sian Woman,
&c. see Dr.
Still. against
T. G. p. 253.

ning *Image-Work* so universally as they did ; I grant, that their zeal against *Image-Worship* transported them beyond the bounds of Reason ; especially *Tertullian*, who in the foresaid Book tells us , that *Artificers of Statues and Images, and all carved or engraven works of this kind, were brought into the World by the Devil.* But this I say, that if Images had in those days been used in *Christian Churches*, so much as to excite the *Devotion* of the Faithful, much more to receive their *Adoration* ; neither would these Fathers have condemned the making of Images ; nor, if they had, would the Church have born with so great an Outrage upon their Doctrine and Practice. Some one at least would have appeared in behalf of the *Catholick Church*, as *Melchior Canus* has done in behalf of the *Roman Church* against the *Eliberine Council* in this matter ; who sticks not to say, that *Their Law for taking away Images, was not only imprudently, but impiously established.* The Censure which he so long after pass'd upon that Council, had been fastned upon these men presently, by more than one, as good as *Canus*, if *Image-Worship* had but been allowed then, as it is now established in the *Roman Communion.* They were not so tame as to suffer their Worship to be affronted by their own Members, without taking notice of it. But the truth is, the Monuments of the Ancient Church affords us no accounts of Images any where, but either in *Libraries*, or * at a House-door, or in the *Holes of Hereticks*, or in the *Temples* of false Gods. We read indeed of one *Picture of Christ*, or some Saint, which *Epiphanius* found in a Curtain of the Church of *Anablatha* ; but he took it down and tore it in pieces. Such accounts as this are not for the credit of *Image Worship* ; which indeed came into the Church at the tail of other Corruptions. And the Fathers are so unanimous and positive against

gainst it, that I will shut up this matter with the testimony of a great many Fathers in one testimony, viz. that of the *Eliberine* Council held about the beginning of the fourth Age. *It is our pleasure, that Pictures ought not to be in the Church, lest that which is worshipped or adored, should be painted upon Walls.* Concil. Elib. Can. 35.

As for the *Reliques* of Saints and Martyrs, we hear of none for the three first Ages, but their *Bodies*; nor any thing concerning them, but that they were interred with all possible Respect that could be expected from *Men*, and which is more, from *Christians*. The honour which by the custom of the World we learn is proper to the Bodies of the Dead, is to give them a decent Interment. This was maintained and cherished by the ancient *Christians*, not onely because reasonable Souls once lived in those Bodies which they committed to the ground, which was an Inducement common to men; but because also those Bodies and Souls were to be once again joyned at the Resurrection, which was an Inducement proper to *Christians*. It was the same kind of honour which they shewed to the Bodies of Martyrs, though heightened with the expressions of a more than ordinary love. Thus, after the Martyrdom of St. *Stephen*, *Devout men* * *carried him out to be buried, and made great lamentation over him.* * Orig. contra Cels. lib. 5. Tertul. de Animâ. Act. 8. 2.

The like account did the *Smyrniens* give of their disposing the Bones of *Polycarp*, which they reckoned *more valuable than precious Stones, more precious than Gold*. *M. de Meaux* sure would not desire a farther progression of *Love and Honour*. But with this degree they contented themselves: for say they, † *We committed them to burial where it was usual.*

† ἡμεῖς αὐτῶν σπέρματα, ὅτε καὶ ἀπολαύοιεν ἡμεῖς.
Sm. Epist. sup.

And thus *Pius* the first of that name, Bishop of *Rome*. *Take care, saith he, of the Bodies of the Holy Martyrs, as*
I 2 of

Cura, quemadmodum curaverunt. Curare here, is the same with *custodire*.
Pius. Epist. 2. Tom. 1. Con. See Cypr. Ep. 37. Cypr. Epist. 2.

of Gods Members, after that manner that the Apostles took care of Stephen's.

Thus the Clergy of Rome in their Epistle to the Clergy of Carthage, when St. Cyprian was absent: To speak of a matter of very great consequence. If the Bodies of Martyrs or others be not buried, it is a very dangerous fault in those that are to look after this business. So that in those days, it should seem to be a Charge entrusted to select Persons, that the Bodies of Martyrs and other Christians, should be buried; and this not onely at Carthage, but at Rome too.

But why should I multiply Testimonies in so plain a case? Had the Reliques of Martyrs and Saints been worshipped in those best times, as they were afterward, how come it to pass that in all the Monuments of those times, no mention of any such thing is to be found? When the Trade of Reliques began in the Church, there was noise enough made of it, and the best Authors acquaint us with the News. But it had been no News, if the Trade had been begun before. Why was no such thing objected to the Christians, by their watchful Enemies, for three hundred years together? For we no sooner come to hear of Stories of Reliques in the Church, but we find the Pagans at the heels of this Innovation, and upbraiding the Christians with the superstition of it. Why meet we not with some intimation of laying up Reliques in Churches under the Altar? There was room enough for so considerable and necessary a circumstance, (and the Church of Rome makes more than a circumstance of it) in that particular description of the fashion and Ornaments of the Church built by Paulinus Bishop of Tyre. Why meet we with no Translations of Bodies from one place to another, for their greater honour? Perhaps we shall be told of the men from the East, that came

came to *Rome*, and challenged the Bodies of *St. Peter* and *St. Paul*, as of right belonging to them; and of their carrying them two Miles out of Town to a place called *Catacumbæ*, and all the other Adventures that *Gregory* tells upon this business. But then there will arise a great question, whether we are to believe with *Gregory* that they were *Eastern Believers*, or with *Baronius*, that they were *Thievish Greeks*? or rather it will be no question, that the whole Relation is fabulous from one end to the other.

*Greg. lib. 3.
Ep. 30.
Baron. A. D.
221. N. 4.*

In short, why have we all this time no account of Miracles wrought by Reliques, of carrying them about in Processions, of exposing them to receive the Adorations of the People, of wearing them as a special security against Spiritual and Temporal Evils, or of any instance of this kind of Religion? I answer, It is a fond thing to imagine, that the Religion of Worshipping the Reliques of the Saints, should be in use amongst them, who gave no Religious Worship to the Saints themselves.

But it is not to be wonder'd at, that they who pray to the *Souls* of the Saints and Martyrs, who are so far absent from us, that they hear us not, should be guilty of another weakness, and Worship their *Bones* and other Reliques, which neither hear nor see, though they are present.

This account of the Sentiments of the Three first Ages, and indeed of the better half of the Fourth we gather from the Writings of the Fathers, and from the undoubted Monuments of those Times. Monsieur de Meaux knew that these things had been diligently expounded by those of the Reformation, and particularly by *M. Daille*. And what does he oppose to this, to save his pretences to *All Antiquity* harmless? Says he, *Without*

Exp. p. 51

any

Reverſus de
Tradition.
par. 3. &c.

any farther examination what might be the Sentiments of the Fathers of the Three first Ages, I will content my self with what M. Daille is pleased to grant, who allows us so many great men who taught the Church in the Fourth Age. Now M. Daille neither made any such allowance, nor had he any reason to make it. But suppose he had, must all that he had written concerning the sence of the Three first Ages, about the *Object of Worship*, go for nothing? If this example of Writing is fit to be followed, I know not why I should give my self any farther trouble, and not rather conclude thus: That without any farther examination what may be the Sentiments of the Fathers of the following Age, I shall content my self with what some great men of the Roman Church are pleased to grant, and which is evidently proved against all the rest that deny it, viz. That the Fathers of the Three first Ages must be allowed to us. And so leave it to the World to judge who has most reason to be content.

§ 9.

But having undertaken to give some account of the beginnings of the present Superstitions of the Church of Rome, in the matter of Saint-Worship, and the Adoration of the Images and Reliques of the Saints: And because it is impossible to do this, without going beyond the first Ages, till we come to the Reign of Julian; I must venture beyond him, and consider the state of the Church toward the latter end of the Fourth Century, with respect to these questions. Some of the Romanists pretend that Antiquity to be on their side, which I have shewn is with us. But as far as I can perceive, they all pretend to be very confident they shall carry it thus high at least; and Monsieur de Meaux takes it for granted, that we begin

begin to allow them those later Fathers. I shall endeavour to represent the case as impartially as if I were yet to chuse my Opinion ; and I am very much mistaken if it will not appear in conclusion (though there is a little more colour for their challenging the latter end of the Fourth Age, in favour of their Doctrine and Practices in these things, than for appealing to higher Antiquity) that upon a true consideration of the grounds upon which they challenge these later Fathers as their own, it had been more advisable for them to have come down much lower to find Presidents whereby to justify themselves. It had been a very Ancient custom of the Church for *Christians* to meet at the *Cæmeteries* or Burying-places of the Martyrs and the rest of the Faithful, there to celebrate Anniversary Commemorations of the *Martyrs*. Thus the Church of *Smyrna* having intimated that they had buried the Body of *St. Polycarp* in the usual place, they added, that in *that place, God willing, they should assemble together to celebrate the Birth-day of his Martyrdom with all the joy they could express* : And the reason of this Custom they express in this manner : *Both to Commemorate those who had already undergone the trial of Martyrdom, and to exercise and to prepare those that were to follow, for the like Conflicts*. But they did not meet here to celebrate the *Memories* of the *Martyrs* only, but at other times also for the celebration of Divine Service. For we find that *Valerian* and *Gallien* forbid the *Christians* to celebrate Assemblies, or to meet at those places which they called *Cæmeteries*, which passages and the like imply that it was *ordinary* for them to Assemble there : And it is not improbable that they used those places for more privacy, when there was danger of persecution ; and that the prohibition of Assemblies in those *Cæmeteries*, was the utmost strictness of prohibiting their Assem-

Ep. Smyr.
ubi supra.

Engb. Hist. lib.
7. c. 11.

Id. lib. 8. c. 1.

Assemblies: For it is plain that they had their *Churches* besides in *Cities*, which they built and repaired according to their ability. And so in that favourable time between *Gallien* and *Dioclesian*, we find that they added new Churches in every City, to those which they had before. But whether they were wont to meet at the *Cimiteries* (at other times besides the Anniversary days of the Martyrs) for privacy, or perhaps for the Commodity of those places, when they did not consult privacy, as some think, or whether it was out of special respect to the *Memories* of those Martyrs, I shall not need to dispute; for it is a clear case that they fervently loved those excellent men and women, and honoured their Memories, who had laid down their lives for the Testimony of *Jesus*. This was one reason of celebrating their Anniversary Commemorations, in which they did what highly became them, and carefully kept themselves within this Compass, that Religious Worship was to be given to God only.

But when under *Constantine* the Great the profession of Christianity was not onely safe, but the way to Honour and Greatness, the *Memories* of the *Martyrs* were more frequented than they had formerly been, and stately Churches were built over their Sepulchres; and the Emperour, the Clergy, and the People, seemed to vie with one another who should express the greatest zeal in carrying on so pious a work; which extraordinary fervor, considering the time, was not to be wondered at; for the Church was but now deliver'd not onely out of a raging Persecution, but from the apprehension of any more, and therefore could not but reflect upon the *Martyrs* with all tenderness of affection. And since they were not now alive, to partake in the prosperous and triumphant state of the Church, it was natural to give their

their *Names* and *Memories* all that share in it which was possible to be given ; especially since the present peace and glory of the Church, was under God, so deeply owing to the noble examples of their Fortitude and Patience. The Commemorations of the Martyrs had formerly a double end, to do honour and express a dear affection to them ; and withal to prepare and to excite the Virtue of those that were to suffer afterward, which latter end without all doubt was the most necessary ; but there being now so little occasion for that, the piety of these prosperous times ran out more plentifully in doing honours to those Champions of *Christ*, that had born the heat of the day, and left this Age to enjoy that victory and sweet peace wherewith God had now crowned his persecuted Church.

And as this Zeal was no more than what might be expected from Humane Affection, raised by *Christian* Piety ; so if men could have told where to stop, it had been as much for the honour of *Christianity*, as the excesses to which it grew afterwards were a disgrace to it.

From *Constantine's* coming to the Empire, to the Reign of *Julian*, there passed above fifty years ; and in this time the Reverence of the Martyrs was grown to some excess, beyond Primitive Examples. For it was not onely thought reasonable to build Churches over their Sepulchres, but it should seem there were many that thought their Prayers would speed the better for being made over the Tombs of the Martyrs ; and not content with this, they began at length to search for their Bones ; and it grew to be the Piety of this Age, to disturb the Ashes of the Dead, which it was the Piety of the former Ages to leave in their Graves without disturbance. But as yet their Prayers were directed to

Apud Cyrill. l.
10. contra
Julian. p.
335.

Id. lib. 6. p.
201.

God onely; we have yet no examples of calling upon the Saints and Martyrs. *Julian* himself who aggravated the respect shewn to the Martyrs to the utmost, could not charge them with this, and he very well understood their practice. But, says he, *Since Jesus has said that Sepulchres are full of uncleanness, why do you call upon God over Sepulchres?* It's true, he also charged them with Worshipping the Martyrs, and upbraided them, that having forsaken the Religious Rites of the *Gentiles*, they had gone over to the *Jews*, and yet had not kept to their Religion neither, which had been something. For, then, says he, *you would have worshipped one God instead of many, and not one man [Jesus] or rather many miserable men:* meaning the Martyrs. But this was onely a spiteful construction of the custom of *Christians* in paying their Devotions to God over the Sepulchres of the Martyrs.

Eunapius in
vitâ *Ædelfi*.

Not long after *Julian*, comes *Eunapius*, a most bitter wretch; by whose Censures we may easily observe, that the Devotion of *Christians* towards the Martyrs was still growing to a greater height. I perceive he is cited both by Protestants and Papists; by Protestants, to shew the beginnings of that Superstition we complain of; by Papists, to shew that the Invocation of Saints, and the Worship of Reliques, was at least so Ancient. This Infidel speaking of *Monks* (a sort of men which this Age first brought forth) says, that they heaped together Bones and Skulls of men that had been punished for many Crimes, holding them for Gods; and prostrating themselves before such as had been chastized by order of the Courts of Justice; and believing the better of themselves for being polluted at their Sepulchres. So that they who were but mere slaves, and those none of the best, but soundly lashed, and carrying still the scars and marks of their villany in their very Ghosts,

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are now called *Martyrs*, and made the *Ministers and Messengers of Prayer to the Gods*. Thus did the base Villain reproach the blessed Martyrs of *Jesus*, in contempt of the *Monks*, and indeed of all the *Christians* in those times. For though it should seem that the Trade of *Reliques* was chiefly driven by the *Monks*, yet 'tis evident that great account was made of *Reliques* in almost all places; which together with the daily resort of devout *Christians* to the *Memories* of the Martyrs, gave occasion to this Infidel thus to upbraid them. For no man will believe *all* to be true which he here charges even the *Monks* with. A malicious Enemy always says the worst that he has any colour or pretence to say. And if such occasions and pretences had been afforded by the Ancient *Christians*, as by these, we should certainly have heard the same objections from *Lucian* or *Celsus*, or some one Pagan Writer of those times, who were as able, as spiteful and vigilant Adversaries as *Julian* and *Eunapius*.

But whereas *Eunapius* pretended, that these *Monks* called the Martyrs, *Ministers and Messengers of their Prayers*; he might possibly have no other reason for it, but the common observation that *Christians* went to the Sepulchres of the Saints, there to make their Prayers. For although they directly applied themselves to none but God when they were there; yet the chusing of those places for their Devotions, especially with a profession of hoping to speed the better for so doing, was occasion enough to *Eunapius* to say, that they made the Martyrs, the *Ministers and Messengers of their Prayers*. But for ought any man can tell, *Eunapius* might come to understand that these *Monks* did, what I question not was the custom of some *Christians* towards the latter end of this Age; that is, that they called to the Martyrs at their *Memories*, as if they were present there, of which I shall give

give a farther account in its proper place. It is certain, that many Miracles were said to be done upon Prayers made where the Reliques of the Martyrs were, that is, at their Memories.

Aug. de Curâ
pro Mortis, c.
16.

And some thereupon believed that they were done at their Intercession, and, joyning their own Prayers with the Prayers of the Christian that came thither. In which they were more confirmed by some confident Reports of Visions and Apparitions of the *Martyrs* to those that had obtained their suits. Now of those who believed the Martyrs were within hearing, it is very likely that some called to them with an *Ora pro nobis*; and then no wonder that *Eunapius* charged the *Monks* with raking for dead mens Bones, and making dead men the *Messengers of their Prayers*.

Aug. de Civ.
Dei, lib. 22. c.
9.

As for the Miracles said to be done in those times, they are urged by the *Romanists* as an invincible argument of Gods approving the honour that was given to the Saints and their Reliques in that Age of the Church. But I wish they would attend to what St. *Augustine* says, who after a pretty large account of Miracles that were wrought in his time, and some too at the *Memories* of Martyrs, plainly says, that whether they were wrought by the Ministry of *Martyrs* or *Angels* (for that he knew not) they were wrought to give Testimony to that *Faith for which the Martyrs died*, and particularly to the Resurrection of *Christ*, and to our Resurrection at the last day. There is no reason to suppose that every circumstance of the Devotion of *Christians* that received miraculous relief, must be attested by those Miracles which God wrought in farther confirmation of the truth of *Christianity*. God has made use even of wicked men for the working of Miracles; and I cannot understand why a Miracle may not be wrought in behalf of a *sin-cere*

cere man, without approving his *weakness*, any more than the others *wickedness* is approved by Gods making use of him to testifie the truth. But I would be content to let them use this Argument from Miracles, without contradiction, if they would extend it no farther than in favour of that use of Reliques which we yet meet with: In the fourth Age they ransacked all places for them, and when, as they thought, they got 'em, they put them in fine Linnen, or in curious Boxes and Repositories, and laid them up in the Church. But whatever good they expected from these Treasures, they did not yet worship them; they did not *Incense* them, and expose them to receive the *Adorations* of the People. *Vigilantius*, it seems, had asked, with some derision, *Why dost thou kiss and adore a little Dust put up in fine Linnen?* To which St. *Hierom*, that went as high as any in the Age for honouring Reliques, answered, *Who, O thou giddy-brain'd man, ever adored the Martyrs? Who has taken a man for God?* Indeed St. *Hierom* thought that holy Reliques made the Devils roar for very pain; but yet he did not think that they were to be *adored*, no not the *Martyrs* themselves, but *God* onely. We could wish that all Superstition were banish'd from amongst *Christians*; but if the Church of *Rome* would be content with such things as St. *Hierom* blames in some *filly men* and *religious women*, that had a Zeal, but not according to knowledge; viz. *burning Wax-Candles by day-light in honour of the Martyrs*, we would be content too: for these are tolerable faults, and such as should not break the Peace, though they were better mended. I would say to any contentious man, what St. *Hierom* said to *Vigilantius*, *What dost thou lose by it*, if others are a little foolish?

Hieron. Adv. Vigil. Tom. 2. P. 158. Colon.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Of Miracles done

I confess, I should beg of these Gentlemen, for the honour of our Religion, and of the testimony of Miracles, not to pretend the Miracles of the fourth and fifth *Ages*, as a testimony to every *Punctilio* of Honour done in those times to the *Reliques* of the Saints, & to the opinion which some conceived of them. And as I said before, it would be more discreetly done to let those Miracles go, as St. *Austin* did, for a notable confirmation of the Truth of that Religion for which those Martyrs died, by whose *dead Bodies* God was pleased to do some wonderful things. But it is by no means advisable to stretch them in favour of some other things; whereof the lighting of Candles for the Martyrs may go for one; and the unwillingness of some of 'em to build Churches, unless they could get *Reliques* to lay there, for another; and the scattering of *Reliques* in little pieces up and down, may pass for a third; and stealing them, for a fourth; which I know not how came to be excused at least, as an effect of great and religious Zeal, by some men of no mean note. I do not think such things as these are very easie to be defended; and therefore it were much better that Miracles were not brought in to justify them. But least of all should they be urged in favour of that kind of Worship which the Church of *Rome* now gives them; and not onely to the *Bodies, Bones, or Ashes*, but to the *Girdles, Slippers*, and little *Utensils* of the Saints and Martyrs; which kind of things anciently were not thought of. God wrought Miracles by the hands of St. *Paul*, and the rest of the Apostles, when they were alive. Now if we had their *Bones*, or some pieces of them, and God should be pleased to work Miracles by them still; there would be, I am confident, no more reason upon this account to give their *Reliques* any Religious Worship, now the Apostles are dead, than there was

was to worship the Apostles themselves upon the same account, when they were alive. Moreover, God wrought Miracles by the *Brazen Serpent*, and yet when the People had faln to *burn Incense* to it, it was broken to pieces, to his great honour, who opposed a Zeal with knowledge, to the blind Zeal of the People.

But to deal freely, I am not fully satisfied that these Miracles by the Bodies of Saints and Martyrs, were half so frequent as the noise that was made of them in this Age, or in the next, would make us believe. I more than fear that those times were too credulous, or that the Writings of those Fathers have met with more foul play, than has been yet discovered, though no small discoveries of that kind have been made since the Reformation. It is some prejudice against the credibility of those relations, that in the three first Ages, we hear nothing of Miracles wrought by Reliques; which we are not to wonder at, because they lay quiet in their Graves: and the Ancient Church was so little concerned in this Religion of *Reliques*, that the Bodies of Martyrs that suffered under *Dioctlesian* and *Licinius*, that is, at the end of the third, and the beginning of the fourth Age, lay undiscovered, till Chance or pretended Revelations brought them to light; which is a manifest Argument, that the Ancient Church knew nothing of these matters, and that they had their beginning in the declension of the fourth Age. Again, If the Bodies of *Martyrs* ordinarily discovered themselves by a gift of Miracles, I wonder how it came to be so ordinary a thing to counterfeit Reliques, as it was. For who would dare to put off the Bones of a Malefactor for the Bones of a Martyr, if it was known that true Reliques would distinguish themselves from false, by true Miracles? And yet *St. Austin* himself complains of a multitude of *Cheating Fellows* in his time, that

*Ambros. de
Exhort. ad
Virg.
Socr. lib. 9.
c. 2.*

*Aug. de Opere.
Monach. c. 28.*

that were scattered up and down in the habit of Monks, wandering about from Province to Province, sent no whither, fixed no where, staying no where; some of which professed the Trade of selling the Bones of Martyrs, if you will believe they were Martyrs Bones. It would require a Volume to shew the boldness that was taken in after-times. God has given to a man but one Head, and one pair of Hands; but the Religion of Reliques has found more than one a piece for many of the Saints and Martyrs: And when they all work Miracles, I must needs believe that some of 'em are counterfeit Miracles; and if I can yet discern no difference, I would know why they should not all go for counterfeit. For when God works Miracles, they are too plain for the most part to be denied, even by those whose interest it is to deny them.

*Chrys. Hom. 6.
in 1 Cor. 2.*

But when I consider St. *Chrysostome's* Judgment in the case, I must confess my self to be under a mighty prejudice against the credibility of most Relations of this sort that went in that Age. I well remember that he somewhere gives express caution against listning after Miracles. But in one place, never to be forgotten, very pertinently to the occasion of his discourse, he argues in this manner: *Because NOW there are no Miracles wrought, do not thou take this for an Argument, that none were wrought THEN [in the Apostles days:] For then it was profitable that they should be wrought, but now it is profitable they should not be wrought.* But how, says he, does it come to pass, that *Signes should be profitable Then, and not so Now?* Then he shews, that the continuance of Miracles would lessen the Rewardableness of Faith: and for this reason, says he, *they are not now wrought.* And that this is the Truth, you may see by what our Lord said to Thomas: *Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet believed.* By how much therefore a more convinc-

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cing Miracle is shewn, by so much is the praise and reward of Faith lessened; wherefore, if now also Miracles were done, the same inconvenience would follow. But for a farther Answer, he adds, that although they had now no Miracles, yet several Predictions had been accomplished, which was a continued confirmation of the truth of Christianity; and moreover, that the good Lives and Examples of Christians, were now more necessary for the conviction of Unbelievers, than Miracles: For says he, 'Tis the want of Primitive Sanctity, rather than of Miracles, which makes men still remain in their unbelief.

Which Testimony of so Judicious a man, is a plain Argument that Miracles were at least very rare in his time; and that every Martyrs Bones did not do the same Wonders that *Babylas* his Bones were said to have done in *Julian's* time.

I may therefore be well excused, if I impute that noise of Miracles which was so loud in this and the next Age, in great part to the credulity of the Age, and to the difficulty of standing against that Torrent of Zeal for the honour of the Martyrs, which had carried most men already beyond the bounds of Antiquity.

What shall a man make of that Story which *St. Hieron* tells of *Hilarion's* Reliques? How *Hesychius* a holy man ventured his life to steal the Body of *Hilarion* the Monk out of the Garden of *Cyprus* where he was buried, to carry it to *Palestine*; and how *Constantia* took it so to heart, that she died upon it. For this Religious Woman was wont, it seems, to watch whole days and nights at his Sepulchre, and for the helping of her Prayers, to talk with him as if he was present. I should think it is not much for the Credit of Religion, to represent a holy man plundering a Grave, and a holy woman breaking her heart for the loss of the Body: But if we must be-

*Hieron. de
vitâ Hilario-
nis. Tom. I.
p. 98. Colon.*

lieve the Story, Miracles followed the stoln Body, and yet they tarried in the place from whence it was stoln : So that *Hefychius* indeed, and they of *Palestine*, were considerable gainers ; but *Constantia* was not so great a loser as she thought. For thus the Relation goes on : *We see to this day a wonderful Contention between those of Palestine and those of Cyprus, one pretending to his Body, the other to his Spirit. And yet in both places there are great Miracles done every day, but more in the Garden of Cyprus, and that perhaps because he loved that place best.*

If Miracles were done in both places, I am pretty well satisfied that God did not thereby intend to demonstrate either the clearness of *Hefychius*, or the discretion of *Constantia* in this business, nor the violent passion of either of them for Reliques. I do not deny but they might both of them be holy Persons, but it was not for such things as these ; and if this part of their Story had been omitted, their reputation for Sanctity had lost nothing by it. What therefore was it that God testified by these Miracles ? I answer with all submission, that he testified the truth of *that Religion* in which *Hilarion* died ; of that Religion for which the Martyrs died, the most holy Religion which was first taught by *Jesus*, then by the *Apostles*, then by the Primitive Ages of Christianity after the *Apostles* ; not of any *Sentiments* or *Practices* which neither the Holy *Jesus* taught, nor his *Apostles* ; and which the Primitive Church was a stranger to. This I am sure I have learned from *St. Austin* in the place before-mentioned, who makes the testimony of those Miracles that were wrought at the Memories of the Martyrs, to aim at nothing but the confirmation of the Faith for which they suffered. And if I should say, that they who can be content with the old Religion, may and ought to be content also with the old Miracles, I should

should say no other thing than what I could justify by his Authority. And which is something more, that we are now to try Doctrines not by new Miracles, but by the Scriptures, which we are sure deliver to us the Will of God testified by Miracles. But if God is pleased to add new Miracles out of his abundant goodness, I do not doubt but such Miracles are a Confirmation of the old Religion, as *St. Austin* tells us those were which God wrought by the Memories of the Martyrs. But those Miracles did by no means *Canonize* the weakness of any holy Person in the matter of Martyrs or Saints, and Reliques; not the indiscretion of *Hesychius* or *Constantia*; nor did they give any Authority at all to such Examples.

*De Civit. De
lib. 22. c. 9.*

I suppose the Gentlemen of the Church of *Rome* will grant this, without any trouble; but I question whether they may not be displeased at the producing of this Story, which without any more ado, looks so like a *Satyr* upon the great Author from whom I had it. But what a hard case is ours! *Monsieur de Meaux* and the pretended Catholics, think to bear us down (who honour the Reliques of the Saints no otherwise than the truly Primitive Church did) by the Authority of the later Fathers that lived towards the end of the fourth Age. It has been often shewn, that the Judgment and Practice of that Age in the matter of *Reliques*, is very different from what we now see in the Church of *Rome*. But the Argument is still urged upon us, as if nothing had been said to it. What have we therefore to do, but to shew that so far as there is any Agreement between the Church of *Rome*, and that Age of the Church in the use of Reliques, they should urge it very modestly, and without boasting. We do profess a Reverence for those excellent men, as *M. de Meaux* grants; we acknowledge

Exp. p.

their *Sanctity and Learning*, and we praise God for the Benefits which the Church hath received by their means. But we do not think their Authority equal to that of the Apostles, or of the Fathers of the three first Ages. And we are very sorry that the importunity of our Adversaries puts us upon a necessity of confessing that these *Great Men* (as *M. de Meaux* deservedly calls them) did in the heat of their concern for Reliques, sometimes say and do such little things, as plainly shewed they were but *Men*. We had been very glad if our English Romanists would not have done this part of the Controversie into English, nor obliged us to take off that Vail a little wherewith we have covered the least commendable Characters of these excellent men. Nay we have *that Reverence for their Sanctity and Learning*, that we are still very willing to believe their Writings to have been corrupted in those places which afford this kind of Stories. And though St. *Hierom* affirms that he wrote the Life of *Hilarion*, yet I must confess this is so weak a part of it which I have mentioned, that I am sometimes almost perswaded that some body has been making bold to mend him. I am sure there appears such a Spirit of Superstition and Credulity in these passages at the end of St. *Hilarion's* Life; of Superstition in the Persons spoken of, and of Credulity in the Relator; that St. *Hierom* is a great deal more beholden to them that cannot be satisfied they are his than to those that can.

But to proceed: I have already observed, that the Affection of this Age to the Martyrs, was express'd by a frequent and continual resort to their *Tombs* or *Memories*. And that when Christians obtained the deliverance or relief which they sought, it was believed to be in great part the effect of the Martyrs favour with God; which in many Persons grew into a Perswasion that the

the *Martyrs* were present at their *Memories*. And in this persuasion they were confirmed by *Apparitions*, which were at least believed to be seen there, since it gave occasion to some questions then, and to a great controverſie afterward, whether they were the Souls of the *Martyrs*, or whether they were Angels that appeared.

But the great question is, whether in thoſe applications to the *Memories* of the *Martyrs*, they called upon God onely, or the *Martyrs* alſo. For here it is that the pretended *Catholicks* muſt find colour of thus much Antiquity, if any where. For their appeals to the *Apoſtrophes* of ſome of the *Fathers* in their *Panegyric*al Oration upon the *Martyrs*, deſerve no conſideration. If indeed the Faithful were wont to call upon the *Martyrs* at their *Memories*; this has ſome appearance of an Argument for the pretended *Catholicks*.

I ſhall therefore firſt lay down the Fact, remembering all along, that it is the duty of an honeſt man to deliver things as they appear to him, and not to attempt the defence even of Truth, but onely with ſuch Arguments as he is well ſatisfied of the Truth of, himſelf. But when the Fact is ſtated, I ſhall not envy the beſt advantages that our Adverſaries can make of it.

That account which St. *Auſtin* gives of the Taylor that had loſt his Cloak, and went to the *Twenty Martyrs* to pray for another, has been often produced as a ſufficient demonstration that the praſtiſe of that Age, was to call upon the *Martyrs* themſelves. But to this it is answered on the other ſide, that no more can be certainly concluded from hence, than that the Taylor went to the *Memory* of the *Twenty Martyrs*, and there prayed to God: As it is ſaid of others, that they went to the *Memory* of St. *Stephen*, and there prayed that God would give them what they wanted, which is a deſenſible interpretation

Ad viginti
Martyres oravit.

Viſum eſt ut
iret ad memoriam S. Stephani, & illis quantum poſſet oraret, ut Deus illi daret. De Civ. Dei. l.

of 22. c. 8.

of such passages. For the Application that was made to the Martyrs by going to their *Memories* or *Churches*, and the hope of prevailing by their Intercessions, did not necessarily imply any Invocation of the Martyrs: But the suppliant believing them to be present at their *Memories*, and to observe the Prayers that were made to God there, might hope for the benefit of their Intercession without speaking to them. As for St. *Austin* himself, what his Opinion was concerning the presence of the Martyrs, I shall shew in another place.

But some of St. *Chrysostom's* Homilies are produc'd with no little assurance, to shew not onely that the Saints were invoked at their *Memories*, but that he approved it too. And indeed St. *Chrysostom's* Authority in a doubtful matter, would bear a little boasting. That Age did not afford a man superiour to him in true Judgment, perhaps not his equal. But then it is but a fair request, that those Homilies be not obtruded upon us for his, of which it is very doubtful whether they be or not; those for instance to the People of *Antioch*, the *Greek* Copies whereof could not be found in any Ancient Library. I interpose this, not for the service of a Cause, but for the honour of St. *Chrysostom*, than whom, no man abounds more with exhortations to pray to God, upon such considerations as these. *Thou mayst always and incessantly call upon God, and shalt meet with no difficulty; for there is no need of Door-keepers to introduce thee, of Stewards or Procurators, of Guards or Friends; but when thou comest by thy self, then will he most of all hear thee, even when thou beseechest none else. We do not so effectually incline him when we intreat by others, as when we do it by our selves.* How this can be reconciled with two or three passages, (which, if they be his, do manifestly imply his approbation of calling upon the Martyrs at their *Memories*)

*Chrys. in 4.
Psal.*

ries) I cannot for my part understand; especially that in the Conclusion of the Homily upon *Bernix*, &c. which I shall examine by and by. For to avoid contention about a matter not necessary to the Cause in hand, I will proceed upon that Testimony, as if it were *St. Chrysostom's*. But whatever *St. Chrysostom's* Opinion was concerning the thing it self, I think it cannot reasonably be denied, that we have his Testimony that it was done: For describing the magnificence of the Monuments of the Saints, which were *more splendid than the Palaces of Kings, not onely for the greatness and beauty of their building, but which was more, for the great resort of devout people thither*; he goes on thus: *For thither even he that is clothed with Purple, goes to embrace their Monuments, and laying by his stateliness, he stands intreating the Saints, that they would intercede with God for him; and he that wears a Crown desires the Patronage of a Tent-Maker, and a Fisherman who died long since.* I cannot approve *Chamier's* rendring of this place, who supposes the Emperour is here brought in (a) *not intreating, but onely needing the intercession of the Saints.* His *Criticism* is too subtile, and does not well accord with the place. But be that as it will; I must confess a few intimations of the Fact will serve to make me conclude, that very many devout people did, besides their Prayers to God, which they made at the *Memories* of the Martyrs, intreat also of the Martyrs themselves the benefit of their Intercessions to God for them; and that because it was generally believed that they were present at their *Memories*.

Chrys. in 2: Epist. ad Corinth. vers. fin.

(a) *ὁ βασιλεὺς δεῖται.*

For if such an Opinion should prevail amongst any considerable number of *Christians* any where, that the Souls of Martyrs or other Saints, were to be conversed with in any certain place where the People could come with-

within their hearing ; it is hardly to be imagined that all, or indeed the most, should restrain themselves from going thither to desire their Prayers. And their Guides, who themselves believed the presence of the Martyrs, would in all likelihood be more forward to commend them to reprove them for it, unless they should be well aware of the ill consequences it might produce. And therefore I do not wonder that this new conceit of the presence of the Martyrs at their *Memories*, should carry the Christians of those times thither very frequently, and many of them to desire the Martyrs to pray for them. This perswasion helped forward the Devotion of the Age, and was apparently countenanced by some of the Fathers, and it should seem was winked at by all, only St. *Austin* seemed to doubt of it, as we shall see presently.

Basil in 40.
Martyr.

But St. *Basil* made no question of it, and therefore manifestly approved the practise that was grounded upon it. For thus he speaks concerning the *Memory* of the Forty Martyrs: *Here, says he, a Religious woman is found praying for her Children, and desiring a safe return for her Husband, that is abroad, and recovery for her sick Husband.* And then he adds, *Let your Prayers be made with the Martyrs.* I know this passage enforceth no more, than that the Prayers made in those places to God would excite the Martyrs to joyn their Intercessions with those of the devout Christian. And perhaps St. *Basil* seems to approve this way, more than calling upon the Martyrs themselves, because he says, *Let your Prayers be made with (not to) the Martyrs.* But that some Christians did speak to the Martyrs too, and were not reprov'd for it, is, I think, very plain from what St. *Basil* says in his Oration upon *Mamas* the Martyr: *You remember the Martyr, says he, as many of you as have enjoyed him in Dreams; as many of you*

you as coming to this place, have had his help towards your Prayer; as many of you as having called to him (b) by name, have found him present by his works; as many Travellers as he hath brought home again, &c. For here I cannot but think that *Mamas* his being called by name, signifies more than a bare wish that he would pray for those that are spoken of: Especially considering how very natural it was for a belief of the presence of the Martyrs in some places, to breed the custom of addressing to them, as a man would do to his Friend that is within the compass of hearing. So that I will not go about to put any other construction upon these words, than this plain one, that some of *St. Basil's* Auditors had called to *Mamas* by name to pray for them, and to assist them in the procuring of that which they had desired of God, or were about to desire of him.

(b) ὁ δὲ ἄνθρωπος
καλεσθεὶς
Basil. Homil.
26. de *S. Mam.*

And here (to use the words of the excellent Bishop *Vlaser*) a man may easily discern the breeding of a Disease, and as it were the grudgings of that Ague, that brake out afterwards into a pestilential Fever.

Answer to Je-
suits Chal-
lenge, p. 444.

I am not insensible what colours this plain and honest dealing may afford to those of the *Roman* Communion, who do not seek for Truth, nor are willing that others should find it. What will they now say, but that we begin to confess the establishment of the Invocation of Saints in the Fourth Age? Monsieur *de Meaux* has said it already upon less occasion given. But we cannot help it if our Consciences be misrepresented by the Artifices of some of 'em, and superficially looked upon by the rest. For my own part, I had rather another man should make a dissingenuous advantage of my dealing truly in defence of the Truth, than go about to take away from him the occasion of using a pious Fraud, by being guilty of a pious Fraud my self.

But I will now be bold to say, that there is so vast a difference between the practise of some Christians in the Fourth Age, who reconciled themselves to the Prayers of the Martyrs; and between the Invocation of Saints, which is now practised and contended for in the Church of *Rome*; that the allowance of the former will by no means infer the latter: The fore-mentioned great man has shewn the difference in several particulars well worth every honest and prudent mans consideration, that desires to inform himself in this matter. And to him I shall the rather refer the inquisitive Reader for them; because I will here add two other differences which may of themselves be sufficient to shew that Monsieur *de Meaux* who says we begin to acknowledge that the *Invocation of Saints was established in the Fourth Age*, would be very much beholden to us, if we should make such an Acknowledgment. For when the Truth comes to be understood, it amounts to this, and no more: That there were but some *beginnings* and *steps* made towards this practise, at the latter end of the Fourth Age; and that these beginnings were *not then established* neither.

For first, The instances produced to shew that devout people were wont to recommend themselves to the Prayers of the Martyrs, do generally shew that they did it at the *respective Memories* of those Martyrs, where the Martyrs were believed to be within hearing; which, as I shall presently shew, makes a great difference in the case. In the mean time, I do not assert that it was universally believed that the Souls of the Martyrs were present at their Memories; for *St. Austin* himself durst not affirm it; and though he thought men fared the better for the Prayers of the Martyrs, yet whether they heard those who called to them at their *Memories*, or where-ever else they were thought to have appeared, he

Ibid. from p.
445. to p. 457.

*Aug. de Cura
pro Mortuis,*
c. 16.

he professed that it passed the strength of his Understanding; and this although he allowed greater privileges to the Martyrs than to other Saints. St. *Austin* could not digest an Opinion, that St. *Hierom* indeed made no difficulty to admit, that a Martyr could at the same time be in places very distant from one another. He that will consult St. *Hierom* about his reason, may find it in a little compass; and when he has done, he will be satisfied that I do not forbear the mentioning of it for any disadvantage it would bring to our Cause. But that which I at present assert, is this: That where we find the Faithful desiring any relief by the Prayers of the Martyrs (whether they prayed to the Martyrs themselves, or not) we still find them at the proper Memories of those Martyrs. Thus St. *Basil*, just now quoted: *You that coming to THIS PLACE have found him an helper to your Prayer.* Thus St. *Hierom* also represents *Constantia* at the Tomb of *Hilarion* in the relation already mentioned. And thus St. *Austin* in that famous Chapter of Miracles done by the Memories of Martyrs, where that relief which was supposed to be obtained by the Twenty Martyrs, was asked at *their Memory*, and not at St. *Stephen's*; as St. *Stephen* was supposed to help those that prayed at his *Memory*. In like manner St. *Chrysostom*, who brings in the Emperour doing *that* honour to the Apostles St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, as to *stand intreating their Prayers*; St. *Chrysostom*, I say, introduces him to their *Monuments*, or *Memories*, where it was that this honour was done to them. And so in the Oration upon *Bernix*, *Prosdice* & *Domnina*, we find this exhortation: *Let us not onely upon this [Anniversary] Festival, but upon other days also stick close to them, and intreat them that we may obtain their Patronage.* The same observation holds, if you go to the Oration upon the *Egyptian Martyrs*, and to that

Hieron. Adv.
Vigilant. Tom.
2. p. 153.

De Civ. D. lib.
22. c. 8.

Chrys. Tom.
5. Hom. 65.

Id. Tom. 5.

Aug. de Curâ
ubi suprâ.

upon *Ignatius*; and indeed it holds so generally that it should in reason interpret any place that mentions Invocation of the Martyrs, where it is not evidently expressed that it was done at their Memories; I mean as I said before, their *respective Memories*: Unless some other place be distinctly mentioned, as in that place of *St. Austin* now referred to, where the presence of the Martyr out of his *Memory* was supposed to be witnessed by his *appearing*, or by his *works*. But this was very extraordinary. The usual way of soliciting the Prayers of a Martyr, was to go to his *Memory*.

Ambros. De
Viduis Tom. 4
Col. 505, 506.

The hardest passage of all to be accounted for by this Rule, is that of *St. Ambrose*, where he tells the Widows that the *Angels* are to be intreated as well as the Martyrs. For though later times have found Reliques of *Angels*, yet they had none then. The whole place is something obscure, yet I will try to give the best account of it that I can. His business was to persuade *Widows* to continue unmarried; and he tells them, that by good works and devotion, they would gain the assistance of the Prayers of the Apostles and Martyrs, who would now help those that were not a-kin to them, as effectually as they helped their kinsmen by their Prayers, when they were upon Earth. And then he has these words: *I would to God that there was somebody who could so readily pray for us; or indeed that very Peter who prayed for his Wives Mother, and Andrew his Brother; for then they were able to obtain for their kinsmen, now they can obtain for us and for all.* I can make nothing of this, but that *St. Ambrose* was not sure *St. Peter* and *St. Andrew* were near enough to have their Prayers desired, or to be spoken to; though the best way to engage their Prayers, and to have them near us, was to abound in *Alms* and *Devotion*. But then he adds: *The Angels are to be intreated, who are*

are given to us to be our Guardians : The Martyrs are to be intreated, whose Patronage we seem to challenge after a sort, by having the Pledge of their Bodies. They can pray against our sins who have washed away their own sins, if they had any, by their own Bloud. So that the conclusion seems to be this : that although the best way of engaging all the Apostles and Martyrs, was to abound in Alms and Prayers, yet it would be very good also for every one to intreat his Guardian-Angel to pray for him, and to desire the same of those Martyrs whose Reliques were a Pledge of their nearness and presence. If this be not the meaning of St. Ambrose, (for I do not love to be confident about the meaning of a place that is not very clear) I shall be glad to be better instructed. If it be, this is a farther confirmation of what I have observed, that the calling upon Martyrs in those days, went by their Reliques and Memories. And by the way, this single instance of advising to intreat the Angels too, seems to proceed upon the common reason, viz. a supposition of the presence of those Angels, that God had given for our Guard. And it was a current Opinion amongst some of the Greek Fathers, (whom St. Ambrose studied and imitated very industriously) that every good man had his Angel ; though I am not satisfied that any but St. Ambrose carried the Opinion to this conclusion, that men should intreat their Angels to pray for them.

So that notwithstanding the singularity of St. Ambrose in advising to call upon Angels, I see little reason why he should be thought to speak in this fashion, merely because he was in comparison but a Novice in Christianity, when he wrote this Book. Towards the end of his life he seemed to be as fond as ever he had been of the Reliques of Martyrs, and very desirous to make his Prayers over

Paulinus in
vitâ Ambros.
Paris. Amb.

over them, if *Paulinus* may be believed; who observed, that if the *Holy Priest* went to pray in a place at which he had never been seen to pray before, this was a token that he knew by Revelation the Body of some Martyr to lie hid thereabouts. So that although the Bodies he then speaks of were soon translated into the Church of the Apostles, yet *St. Ambrose* would loose no time, but went forthwith to say his Prayers to God at the places where they lay buried, and probably enough to speak to them too; believing that they were there near enough to observe and hear him, and that they would assist him with their Prayers.

* ἡ προσευχή
τοῦ Στῆ.
† ἡ προσευχή
τοῦ Στῆ.
Sozom. lib. 7.
c. 24.

Thus *Sozomen* tells us, that *Theodosius* going out of *Constantinople* in his Expedition against *Eugenius*, and coming to the seventh mile, there * *prayed to God*, and likewise † *called to John the Baptist to help him*. I shall not need to insist upon the difference of Expression, *praying to God*, and *calling to the Saint*, though several instances might be produced in favour of such an observation. For here also we find that the place where the Emperour *prayed to God*, and withal *called upon the Baptist*, was no other than that Church which he had built for a *Memory of St. John Baptist*. For it seems, certain Monks of the *Macedonian Heresie* were said to have found the Head of the *Baptist* at *Hierusalem*; which after several removes, was at last brought by *Theodosius* to *Constantinople*, in the Suburbs whereof he buried it, and erected a stately Church over it. So that here the Reliques of the Martyr were a Pledge of his Presence and Patronage; and here it was that *Theodosius* did not onely pray to God, but called to the Saint for his Assistance too. *Ruffinus* indeed tells us, that he sought help by the intercession of other Saints; but where was it? Not here at *St. John Baptist's Memory*; but

Ruffin. Hist.
lib. 2. c. 33.

Ibid. c. 21.

but where the *Reliques of the Apostles and Martyrs were kept*, that is in other *Memories*. But when the Empe-
 rour was come into *Italy*, and had the Enemy before
 him in the Field; though we find that he prayed, yet
 there is not the least intimation of calling upon the
Baptist, or upon any other Saint there. It is onely said,
 that *prostituting himself upon the ground, he prayed with* *Sozom. lib. 7.
c. 24.*
tears, and God presently heard his Prayers. But though
 the Victory was without all question to be *ascribed to*
God, yet *Sozomen* relates a strange story, which he had
 taken, as it seems, upon common report, how the Devil
 ascribed it to *John the Baptist*. For the same day that
 the Battel was fought, a man possessed being in the Church
 of *St. John Baptist*, was heaved up very high from the
 ground, and the Devil that was in him, *railed at the*
Baptist, and reproached him for having lost his head; but
 yet could not forbear confessing to him in this manner:
Thou overcomest me, and defeatest my Army. I confess I
 am apt to suspect foul play in this prank of the Devil, if
 it were true; and do believe, that God ought to have
 had the Glory, not a whit the less for the Devils giving
 it to the Saint. But such kind of reports were made
 use of to confirm People in an opinion of the presence of
 the Martyrs at their Memories, (for the Devil's speak-
 ing to *John the Baptist* here, was his acknowledgment of
 it) and in the practice of making addresses to them
 there upon that account.

Ibid.

Nothing yet appears to the contrary, but that they
 who thought the Martyrs heard when they were spoken
 to, believed their presence to be limited to some certain
 places, in the compass of which they were within hear-
 ing. But I am not so vain as to undertake that there
 were none in those days who called upon the Martyrs in
 all places indifferently: For while the Great men of
 that

Addresses to the Martyrs, &c.

that Age seemed to give a full scope to that strain of zeal towards the Martyrs which was now going forward, it is to be feared rather, (though no such thing appears) that some of the people made no difference between calling upon their Martyrs at their *Memories*, or any where else. And so it certainly was when one of those Sermons was written that are safely attributed to St. *Ambrose*.

*Serm. de Fest.
Nazarii &
Celsi. Tom 4.*

But 'tis enough for my present purpose, that the custom of calling upon the Martyrs at their respective *Memories*, was as yet very notorious. And this indeed was the ground of that Scoff of *Vigilantius*, for which St. *Hierom* chastises him so severely: *What, says he, are the Souls of the Martyrs therefore so fond of their own Ashes? do they hover about them, and are always present with them, lest perhaps if any one comes to pray, they should be absent, and incapable of hearing him?* To the matter of which Question, St. *Hierom* was almost silent; but he lashes him for abusing and laughing at the Reliques of the Martyrs. The truth is, *Vigilantius* had hit that Popular Opinion, that the Martyrs were very much present with their Reliques, and consequently, that the best way to be sure of them, was to go to the Churches where their Reliques were, unless (which happened very seldom) they should discover a particular affection to some other place, as St. *Hilarion* did to the Garden of *Cyprus*, after his Reliques were stolln out of it.

*Hierom. Adv.
Vigil. ubi su-
pra.*

Now therefore as the first Addresses that were made to the Martyrs had not the nature of *Prayer* or *Religious Invocation* in any other respect, so neither in this, that they ascribed *Omnipresence* to the Saints or Martyrs. For not onely the *Belief* of that Age, but the *Practice* of it too, in seeking the Intercession of the Saints, limited their presence to some determinate places, and generally to their

their *respective Memories*. They that called upon the Saints at all, did not indifferently call upon them in any place, but (if we may gather the general practice from such particular instances as we have) they invoked them in some certain place onely, where they were thought to be within hearing. Nor can I find that they thought it reasonable to speak so much as to one Saint, at the *Memory* of another; but rather to every Saint at his own.

Which makes the Addresses of those times to the Martyrs, very different from the Invocation of Saints in the Church of *Rome*, which hath let her Children loose to call upon every Saint in every place, as occasion requires; and has furnished them with *Litanies* of Supplication to all the Saints, to be used in all places of the World.

He that cannot see a wide difference between these two things, can see nothing. The first practice of all, setting aside the ill consequences of it, was to say the worst of it, but a harmless Superstition; that is, when as yet the *Reliques* of the Martyrs were intire, and there was but one *Memory* to one. The next step indeed was something dangerous, which began also in this Age, and that was allowing some of them several Memories in distant places, at every one of which, I believe they were spoken to by some or other; though it was yet pretty well, that they confined them all within some bounds. But the last Practice is an intolerable Affront to the Divine Majesty, because it does in effect ascribe *Omnipresence* to a Creature. The progress of the mischief from so small a beginning, to so strange a conclusion, was plainly this: By dispersing the Reliques of the same Martyrs into two or more, and at length into many places, their *Memories* were by degrees strangely multiplied; and
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Theod. de Chr.
 Græc. Aff. l. 8.
 de Mart.

that to speak the Truth, not inconsiderably in the next Age, as appears by *Theodoret*; and so by degrees they were allowed a greater; and by the help of new Reliques (when the old ones would bear dividing no longer) still a greater compass of presence; till at last Superstition and worldly Policy together, would not allow any bounds at all to be set to their presence, but would have them *called upon* no less than God in all places whatsoever.

This account of the latter Practices of the fourth Age in this matter, and of the grounds of their Practice, may perhaps deserve to be added to a great many others, whereby the difference of the Addresses to the Martyrs in that Age, from the *Roman* Invocation of Saints, has been shewn. I shall say no more of it, than that it may appear fair and reasonable to any man that shall take the pains to compare one thing with another. At least, it deserves some consideration, because if the Addresses that were made in that Age to the Martyrs, were limited to some certain places; it will destroy an Appeal to that Age for an Invocation which is unlimited, and ascribes Omnipresence to the Saints. And therefore if in assigning this difference, I have proceeded upon a mistake of the Practice of that Age, the Gentlemen of the Church of *Rome* are concerned to shew it. And when they do, it will be my part to shew that I am not fond of a *Notion*, but can with more ease reject it, when it appears to be false, than I entertained it while it seemed to be true.

But then 2. As the Addresses of the Fourth Age to the Saints were not properly Religious Invocations, so neither were they *established* in the Church. There was no publick Rule or Order for them, but they were wholly the effects of a private and voluntary Zeal, encouraged by some of the Guides of the Church, and perhaps con-

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nived at by all. They were, I say, the actions of so many single *Christians* in behalf of themselves or their near Relations, but no part of the established Service of the Church. The *Liturgies* were every where still the same, and none but God was called upon in the Service performed at the Religious Assemblies of the Church. If the pretended Catholics could shew a Change in the Service of the Church about this time, favouring the Invocation of Saints, that indeed were something. But then they must not refer us to the shameful Interpolations of *St. Chrysostom's*, and other ancient Liturgies. It were an easie matter to be very large upon this Head, but for a reason I shall mention presently, we will for the present go no farther than to *St. Austin*. For if his Authority be of any weight with them, they will see that whatever was done in the way of private Worship by single Persons, there was no change of the Service of the Church in this respect, but that God onely was invoked in the stated Assemblies of the Faithful. Let us therefore hear what *St. Austin* says, *The Gentiles, faith he, have built Temples, raised Altars, and ordained Priests, and offered Sacrifices to their Gods. But we do not erect* De Civit. Dei lib. 22. c. 10. *Temples to our Martyrs, as if they were Gods, but Memories as to dead men, whose Spirits live with God. Nor do we erect Altars upon which to sacrifice to Martyrs, but to one God onely do we offer, the God of Martyrs, and our God; at which Sacrifice, as men of God who in confessing him have overcome the World, they are named in their place and order, but they are not invoked by the Priest who sacrifices.*

St. Austin plainly speaks of the publick Service of the Church at the Assemblies of the Faithful, in which, if we will take his word, no Addresses were made, but to God onely. And he expressly says that the Priest who

Theod. de Cur.
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that to speak the Truth, not inconsiderably in the next Age, as appears by *Theodoret*; and so by degrees they were allowed a greater; and by the help of new Reliques (when the old ones would bear dividing no longer) still a greater compass of presence; till at last Superstition and worldly Policy together, would not allow any bounds at all to be set to their presence, but would have them *called upon* no less than God in all places whatsoever.

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St. Austin plainly speaks of the publick Service of the Church at the Assemblies of the Faithful, in which, if we will take his word, no Addresses were made, but to God onely. And he expressly says that the Priest who

administred the Service, did not invoke the Martyrs, but named them *in order*, as men that had overcome the World, that is, gave Thanks and Prayers to God for them. And here I am much mistaken, or else there is an observable difference intimated between the voluntary Addresses of single Persons to the Martyrs at their *Memories*, and between the mention that was made of the Martyrs when the Faithful assembled for the ordinary Service of God at the same *Memories*: For when in voluntary and private Devotion, the Saints were spoken to, it was still at their respective *Memories*; but in the Assemblies of the Church for Divine Service, they were indifferently mentioned in their place and order, at all the Memories of the Martyrs, but not invocated. But that which I chiefly observe, is this: That neither was the Martyr, whose *Memory* was the place of God's publick Service, invocated in the Prayers of the Church; so that even the Addresses of that Age to a *Martyr* at his *own Memory*, were not established by the Order and Service of the Church, but left to the voluntary Zeal of single Persons.

And therefore those Passages of this Father referred to by *M. de Meaux*, make nothing for Invocation of Saints. St. *Austin*, it seems, (though it was a singular Opinion of his') thought *it an * injury to a Martyr to pray for him, by whose Prayers we our selves are to be commended*; and therefore the Martyrs were not mentioned in that place of the Service, where *other dead Persons were commemorated*, viz. those for whom Prayer was made. And says he, † *At the Holy Table we do not so commemorate them as we do others that rest in peace*, viz. as those for whom we pray; but rather as those that pray for us, that we may tread in their steps. Now though St. *Austin* was one of those that doubted whether the

Peti-

* De Verb.
Apost. Serm.
17.

† Tractat. in
Joh. 84.

Petitions of the Faithful arrived to the knowledge of the Martyrs, yet he doubted not that the Martyrs prayed for the Faithful, which is all that can be proved from these places. But what is this to the Invocation of them, which St. *Austin* also expressly denies, in saying that *they are not invoked by the Priest who Sacrifices*?

And here we must remember what the Ancient Fathers meant by the *Christian Sacrifice*. Not only the Oblation of Bread and Wine brought by all the People, and presented at the Holy Table, with the Prayers of the Priest, nor onely the Consecration of those Elements afterwards to be the Memorials of Christs Body and Blood, which they first laid before God, and then distributed to the Faithful; I say, we must remember that they did not onely mean these *visible* Sacrifices, but likewise all the Prayers, Praises, and Thanksgivings of the Church, which were *Vocal* Sacrifices, together with *Contrition of Heart*, and all *pious Affections* answerable to the Outward Sacrifices; by which the Faithful offer'd up * themselves a Sacrifice to God. This was that *Reasonable Service*, and *unbloudy Sacrifice*, which the Priest in behalf of all the People, solemnly offered up to God. So that St. *Austin's* meaning is this: That the Faithful being assembled at the Memories of the Martyrs for Divine Service, the Martyrs are not Invoked by the Priest in any part of the Administration. And therefore the distinction of Sacrificial and Extrasacrificial Prayers will not avoid this Testimony, since the Prayers of the Faithful at their Religious Assemblies, were all *Sacrificial* Prayers, as being part of the *Christian Sacrifice*.

* *Aug. de Civ. lib. 10. c. 6.*

And St. *Austin*, whose Testimony this is, did in this notion of Sacrifice, clearly follow the Doctrine of the more Ancient Fathers: *Let us observe*, saith he, *that where God said he would not have Sacrifice, there it is shewn that*

Ibid. c. 5.

Addresses to the Martyrs in the fourth Age

that he will have Sacrifice. He willeth not the Sacrifice of a slain Beast, but he will have the Sacrifice of a contrite Heart. And afterwards he addeth these instances, as the Ancients had done before him. The Psalmist saith, Offer unto God the sacrifice of praise, and pay thy vows to the Most High, and call upon me in the day of tribulation, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorifie me.

Ibid. c. 19.

'Tis true, that he sometimes distinguisheth the *visible Oblations* of the Church, from Prayers and Praises; as where he argues, that the *visible Sacrifices* are to be offered up to God onely; whose *visible Sacrifice* we our selves are in our hearts; as in *vocal Prayer and Praise* we pray to God, and praise him onely, to whom we offer the devotion of the Heart. But though in that place he doth not call Prayers and Praises, *Sacrifices*, as he doth elsewhere very frequently; yet even there he taketh it for granted, that when the Faithful were assembled for praying to God and praising him, they addressed themselves to none but to Him.

It is so plain even from this Father, that the Invocation of Martyrs and Saints, was no part of the Service of the Church, that I have thought fit to insist onely upon his Testimony; especially since Monsieur de Meaux has been pleased to bring in the words of the Council of *Trent*, explaining their practise in Invoking the Saints: *Because, saith he, the Council doth almost make use of the very words of this Holy Bishop. Let us first hear the words of the Council: The Church does not offer Sacrifices to the Saints, but to God alone, who has Crowned them: The Priest also does not address himself to St. Peter and St. Paul, saying, I offer up to you this Sacrifice; but rendring thanks to God for their Victories, he demands THEIR ASSISTANCE, to the end that those whose Memory we celebrate upon Earth, would vouchsafe to pray for us in Hea-*

Heaven. Now let us hear the words of St. Austin, in that place to which Monsieur de Meaux refers. But we do not appoint Temples, Priesthoods, Holy Rites, and Sacrifices to the Martyrs, because not They, but their God is our God. Indeed, we honour the Memories of the Martyrs as of holy men, &c. But who of the Faithful ever heard the Priest, standing at the Altar, though erected for the Honour and Worship of God, over the holy Body of a Martyr, to say in the Prayers, I offer Sacrifice to thee, O Peter, or Paul, or Cyprian; when at their Memories 'tis offered to God, who made them both Men and Martyrs, and associated them to the Angels in heavenly glory; that by this solemnity we may give thanks to the True God for their Victories, and that we by renewing in our selves the remembrance of them, may be excited by imitating them to strive for such Crowns and Palms as they have obtained † THE SAME True God BEING INVOCATED FOR OUR ASSISTANCE. It seems there is almost no difference made by putting the Saints instead of God. Let Monsieur de Meaux lay his hand upon his Heart, and tell us honestly for once, whether *Eodem invocato in Auxilium*, do not refer to the True God spoken of before, and not to the Saints? And if so, what there is in this passage of the Holy Bishop, that makes for the Invocation of Saints?

Ibid. lib. 8. c. 27.

† Eodem invocato in Auxilium.

And now Monsieur de Meaux may go on as long as he thinks fit to make Triumphs, upon our Acknowledgement, that during the Fourth Century, the Church desired the Prayers of Martyrs, and honoured Reliques. For he goes on in this strain, in his late Pastoral Letter, where he declaims so Tragically against those that (if you will believe him) charge Idolatry upon the Illustrious Fourth Age; yea that very Age wherein the Prophecies of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ were accomplished more manifestly than

Pastoral Letter, p. 29.

The Authority of the fourth Age

than ever ; when the Kings of the Earth till then Persecutors of the Name of Jesus, became according to the Ancient Oracles, his Adorers. My Lord the Bishop of *Meaux* knew when it was convenient to use the stile of a perfect Gentleman. But since he wrote his Exposition, the *Case* of some of his Countrey-men is something altered, though the *Cause* be the same. Now the *Blasphemies* of the Protestants put him into fits of Amazement, and he cannot tell what *Horror* they are worthy of. But to do him right, he keeps true to one old principle, that will I believe be dear to him as long as he lives : *Once more, my Brethren, let us not dispute, let us not run into Controversie.* No, by no means ; for it is much easier to *declaim*, than to *dispute*, to take things for granted, than to prove them ; and to make *general* flourishes, than to enter into examination of *particulars*. What can be more easie than to exclaim in this manner ? *The Ambroses, the Augustines, the Hieroms, the Gregories of Nazianzene, the Basilus's, and the Chrysostomes, whom all Christians have respected even till now as the Doctors of Truth !* But hold a little ; if great Names will do the business, let us see what we can do in this kind : *" Can you endure, my Brethren, those who have forsaken the Ireneus's, the Justin-Martyrs, the Clemens's of Alexandria, the Tertullians, the Origenes, the Cyprians, the Athanasius's, whom all Christians do pretend even now to respect as Doctors of Truth ? Those, my Brethren, that were more Ancient than the Ambroses, &c. and most of whom laid down their lives in a Glorious Martyrdom, which none of the other did ? It is true, Brethren, that some part of the Prophecies was fulfilled, when, the Empire took the Church into its protection ; but we do not find it was foretold also, that the Christians of that Age would be wiser or better than their Forefathers.* Does not Monsieur *de Meaux* tell us, *that*

Anti-

"*Antichrist must come according to the Predictions of the Apostles.* But when that happens, the times are not to be much the better for it. It was the admirable goodness of God, to Crown the *Church* at last with Peace and Glory. But do not think the Authority of that Age is to be regarded the more, because it was *Illustrious* for the *Wealth* and *Splendor* of this World, least by the same reason you should undervalue the Authority of the more Ancient Ages, which were *Illustrious* for nothing but *Truth*, and *Godliness*, and *Martyrdom*; which if you should do, my Brethren, might we not well cry out, *Oh prodigy, unheard of amongst Christians!* that we should begin to think it a better mark of a pure Church, to have it in its power to persecute others, than to endure persecution her self after the example of *Christ* and his *Apostles*.

It is an easie matter to requite a Declamation. But would not the Bishop of *Meaux* say to this, that the *Irenæus's*, &c. do not condemn what is now practised in the Church of *Rome*? So do we say that we are far from charging the *Ambroses*, &c. with Idolatry; and that the Doctrines and Practises of that Age, with respect to the points that we are upon, are so vastly different from what we now see in the Church of *Rome*, that if the Church of *Rome* be Idolatrous, it does by no means follow, that the Fourth Age was so. So that we must come to *disputing* at last, whether we will or not, if we talk of these questions to any purpose.

I have shewn the first steps that were made towards the *Invocation of Saints*, which I confess is an Innovation maintained by the Church of *Rome*, that of all the rest bids the fairest for Antiquity: Because there was a certain Address to Martyrs used by many *Christians*, and commended by some of the Fathers towards the latter end of the Fourth Age,

Age, which looks something like it, till you come near to examine the matter thoroughly. But then you may discern so considerable a difference, that 'tis a vain thing to pretend that the *Invocation of Saints*, as now practised in the Church of *Rome*, was as Ancient as the Conclusion of the Fourth Age. All that we need to grant, is this: That those *beginnings* are so Ancient, which first did give occasion to it, and which with the help of *Ignorance* and *Superstition* did at length bring it into the Church.

§ 10.

Hitherto the Honour done to the Martyrs was that of Founding Churches upon their *Reliques*, and frequenting them both for the publick Service of God, and for private Devotions, in which the Martyrs themselves were sometimes called upon, as if they were present at their *Memories*. But this was done before their Images came to be set up in the Church, so much as for Ornament, and long before they were thought of for Worship. We have already noted the Act of *Epiphanius*, in tearing the Picture of *Christ*, or some other Saint, (for he knew not well what it was) which he found upon a *Veil*: An act of Indignation so much the more remarkable, because the Church where it was done was in the Diocese of *John* Bishop of *Hierusalem*, to whom therefore *Epiphanius* thought fit to give an account of it in that Epistle which is to be seen in *St. Hierom's Works*: And the reason he gives for what he did, is as remarkable as the Action was. *When I saw this in a Church of Christ, that the Picture of a man should be hanged up there, against the Authority of the Scriptures, I tare it, &c.* And again, *I intreat thee to command the Presbyters of that place to provide for the future, that such Veils being contrary to what*

Hieron. Tom.
2. Ep. 60. v.
fin.

what our Religion allows, may not be hanged up in the Church of Christ.

But as for the Images of Martyrs and Saints, why should I go about to prove that they were not yet brought into Churches, when the pretended *Catholicks* are fain to give reasons why they were hardly to be met with amongst Christians even out of Churches. *Petavius* excuseth the matter thus: *The Images of Christ and the Saints were not used, lest they should be taken by the rude and unskilful people, for Idols, to which they had been accustomed.* And afterward: *Images are not evil of themselves, nor forbidden by any Law of God; nevertheless, that no shadow of Superstition and Idolatry, might give offence to the tender, and, as I may say, the unsettled minds of Christians, and that the Gentiles might not object to those of our Religion who abhorred Idols, and dissuaded men from them, that themselves also had certain Images of their own; is likely they were but sparingly used for about the first Four Ages, all which time the abominable Worship of Devils in Idols, together with a most cruel vexation of the Christian name, went on. At length the Fifth Age being come, after that the Church had gained her freedom, and began boldly to stretch forth her arms, Images began to appear in most places, and were shewn in Temples and Oratories; whereas hitherto though they had been in some use, yet they were not to be seen so promiscuously and frequently. In good time! But if such a man as *Petavius* could have shewn any use of Images all this while that any Art could draw to his purpose, he had not served the Cause with this miserable account of the late setting up of Images. With the like to which *Salmeron* satisfied himself, as to the silence of the Scriptures about the Worship of Saints, as we have already seen. Now to make this appear likely, he insists upon it, that the Ancients disputed against the Temples*

Petav. Dogm. Theol. Tom 4. part. 2. c. 13. p. 582, 583.

and Altars of the *Heathens*, though when peace and liberty was given to the Church, the *Christians* had magnificent Churches and Altars of their own. But nothing can be more vain, for from the first the Church had its Altars or holy Tables, and its holy Places too, such as the times would permit. And therefore this Instance doth not reach to the Case of Images which they had not. But where the state of the Controversie lay between the Christians and the Heathens about Temples and Altars, and what was the difference between the one and the other, is too long to insert here; and therefore I refer the Reader to Mr. *Mede's* Discourse concerning Churches, *Par. 1. Book 2.* where 'tis handled with exquisite diligence.

But if *Petavius* his reason hath any probability, why were not Images brought in presently upon *Constantine's* coming to the Empire, at least after the death of *Julian*? For then the Church enjoy'd Peace and Power; unless it were to be said, that by stepping boldly into that practise (as soon as they had gained power) which they had utterly condemned in their distress they knew that they should bring the reproach of insincerity upon their Profession, and that therefore it was more advisable to step into it by degrees. But he that can believe this of the Ancient Church, must not pretend any great Reverence for it.

But whereas *Petavius* thought this to be the likely reason, why we hear not of Images so long together, viz. that it would furnish the Heathens with objections. I shall not fear to oppose this Conjecture with another, and to say, that it is more likely and credible; that if the Antient Fathers had thought it lawful to bow down to Images, and to Worship them, they would have brought this practise in with one consent; and that because the

Gentiles

Gentiles had been accustomed to the worshipping of Images : For it is incomparably more easie to bring men from worshipping some Images to worship others, (as the *Jesuits* knew by experience) than from worshipping Images, to worship none at all. Nay, it is yet more likely that Images were brought into several Churches in the fifth Age, in compliance with the inclinations of many of the *Gentiles* ; who, now the Church shined with the Glory of the World, thronged into it, before they had worn off their Superstition and fondness of Images ; and that the reason why it was done no sooner, was this : that the Zeal of the Ancient Church against *Images* being yet fresh in the minds of men, must needs hinder their coming into any use immediately, and leave it to be a work of some time. And it is not unlikely that *Petavius* himself was well aware of these things, for otherwise he was not likely to confess, that in this Controversie about Images, we are not to have regard to the Examples and Orders of the more ancient Church, but rather of latter times ; which is in more civil terms to confess it was an *Innovation* : for surely this learned *Jesuit* knew better, than to say that in a Controversie about the *Antiquity of worshipping Images*, we ought rather to regard latter times than the Ancient Church.

But they that will find Church-Authority for Image-Worship, must go down yet lower, even beyond the fifth, sixth, and seventh Ages of the Church. Pictures were in the fifth Age brought into divers Churches, for Ornament and Instruction. The Histories of the Old and New Testament, and at length the Passions of *Martyrs*, and stories of *Saints*, were to be seen upon the Walls of Churches. Indeed when the seventh Age was now coming in, we find the People of *Marseilles* began to worship Images ; which *Serenus* * their Bishop discern-

* *Greg.* lib. 9.
Ep. 9. ad *St.*
VENN.
ing,

Image-Worship a Notorious Innovation.

ing, broke 'em down. Which breaking of them, *Gregory the Great* disallowed, because he thought *Images* were instead of *Books* to them that could not read; but the worshipping of them he disallowed as much as *Serenus*. It is likely enough that some unwarrantable regard to *Images*, began about the same time to obtain in other places. For in the seventh Age there were warm Controversies about it, which grew to such a heat in the Reign of *Leo Isaurus*, that he commanded the *Images* to be broken down. But Superstition had gotten such an head, that this would not do; but his Son *Constantine* was forced to call together a Council, (which consisted of 338 Bishops) to put an end to those Troubles, if it might be done. And they did their parts effectually: for they did not onely decree against the worshipping of *Images*, but the retaining of them. Now thirty years after this, towards the end of the *Eighth* Age, another Council was assembled at *Nice*, by the promotion of the Empress *Irene*; in which Image-Worship was stoutly maintain'd, but with such kind of Arguments, that if I were for the Worship of *Images*, I should be very well content to lose the advantage of the Councils Authority, provided I might never be reproached with their Reasoning. The Cause was upheld by *Adrian I.* then Bishop of *Rome*, who sent the Acts of this second *Nicene* Council to *Charles the Great*. *Charles* calls a Council of *Italian, German, and French* Bishops at *Frankford*, in which it was determined against the *Constantinopolitan* Council, that *Images* might be retained; and smartly concluded against these *Nicene* Fathers, that without impiety they could not be worshipped. It was unlucky that the late beginning of *Antiquity* for the Worship of *Images*, should be discredited by such an Authority, and robb'd of all pretence to *Universality*. And there-

therefore *Petavius*, as others had done, comforts himself with that vain pretence that the Council of *Frankford* * understood not the sence of the *Nicene* Bishops. It is * *Petav. Dog.*
a vain pretence, because the Acts of the *Nicene* Council Th. Tom 5.
lay before the Fathers of *Frankford*. But the *Nicene* Par. 2. Lib. 15.
Doctrin was condemned about 32 years after this at *Paris*, and was indeed generally opposed in the *Western* Churches. So that it seems there is some reason why Image-Worshippers should not regard the *Examples* and *Constitutions* of the *Antient*, but rather of the latter times of the Church.

But when began the Worship of the Blessed Virgin? And why have we forgotten her all this while? Even because the *Fathers* forgot her first. 'Tis true, we find in *Gregory Nazianzen's* † Oration upon *St. Cyprian*, the † *Greg. Naz.*
story of *Justina* the Virgin, calling upon the Virgin *Mary* to defend her against the unchast designs of *Cyprian*, Orat. 18. T. 1.
who, if we may believe the Tale, was once a Conjuror at *Antioch*, &c. But by *St. Cyprian's* Life, written by *Pontius* his Deacon, it is evident that this story is void of all circumstance of Truth. * *Baronius* himself confesses as * *Bar. A. D.*
much: And by the endeavours that have been used to 250. N. 5.
mend the Tale for the credit of *G. Nazianzen*, 'tis plain See *Daille de*
that there is no remedy, but it must go for an inexcusable *Object. Cultus.*
business. And therefore if ever there was cause from P. 51, &c.
the matter of a Writing imputed to a man of great Name and Authority to conclude 'tis none of his; this equity is to be shewn to *Gregory Nazianzen*; it being incredible that a man of his Worth and Abilities, should either invent such a Lye, or be made to believe it. I confess 'tis hard on the one hand to believe that this story should be so dextrously shuffled into *Nazianzen's* Oration, that the Impostor was never discovered; yet on the other hand, 'tis harder to believe that such a man

The Worship of the B. Virgin

as he should lend his Belief and his Breath to so absurd a Fable.

Epiph. Hæres.
79. lib. 3.
Tom. 2. Adv.
Collyrid.

Epiphanius also tells us of some *Arabian Women* that worshipped the *Virgin Mary*, by laying a Cake before her for some days, and offering it up to her, and then eating it amongst themselves. But that which he says upon this occasion, is by no means for the comfort of her Worshippers. *Let us*, saith he, *put on the Spirits of men, and beat down the madness of these Women.* I know it will be said, that this reproof of those that sacrificed to the *B. Virgin*, reaches not those that do not sacrifice to her, but worship her without sacrifice. But I am sure *Epiphanius* makes no such distinction. *For*, says he, *who of the Prophets ever allowed that a Man should be worshipped, much less a Woman?* If it was the Doctrine of those times, that the *B. Virgin* was more glorious than the *Cherubim* and *Seraphim*; *Epiphanius* did strangely forget himself, and the Person he was speaking of, when he supposed a Man might rather be made an Object of Religious Worship than a Woman, though the *B. Virgin*.

For thus he goes on: *Though the Virgin be a chosen Vessel, she is yet but a Woman.---The old Error shall not reign amongst us to leave the living God, and to worship things that he has made: For if he will not suffer the Angels to be adored, how much less the Daughter of Joachim and Anne, who was born to them as other Mortals are born, &c. of a Father and a Mother.* If the *Virgin* had then been invocated with Prayers and Hymns, is it to be thought that *Epiphanius*, who in the foregoing discourse raised the honour of the *Virgin* as high as Truth would suffer him, would not have said it there, or distinguished it from Sacrifice here? He says indeed, *Let Mary be honoured; but let the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be adored.* But if it had been then as it is now, *Epiphanius* could not have avoid-

Hæc. 78. Adv.
Antidicom.

avoided saying, *Let Mary be worshipped with Religious Invocation indeed, but let God onely be worshipped with Sacrifice.* But does he intimate any thing of this nature? Nay, he does as plainly exclude all Religious Worship of her, as it was possible to exclude a thing which had not then obtained in the Church. For says he, *God did not commit the Power of Baptizing to Mary, or of Blessing his Disciples, or any Authority upon Earth. This onely he vouchsafed to her, to be a Sanctified Creature, and worthy to enter into his Kingdom.* But if she had been then adored in any sort, and *Epiphanius* had approved it, he was strangely forgetful of the duty of a good Writer, not to mention it in this place at least, where the plain Rules of Discourse obliged him, and would have led him to it. All which, makes it evident that we are to take *Worship* or *Adoration* here in the proper sence of the word, and not for *visible Sacrifices* onely. And the whole place is the more unlucky to the Worshippers of the B. Virgin, because no comfort is to be had from that expression of * honouring her, which *Epiphanius* requires * * *τιμῶν ἵστα*
Μαρία. For that by this he did not mean any Religious Worship, is I think reasonably plain, from what he says concerning *Eve*, in this very Discourse: *Let our Mother Eve † be honoured, as being formed by God.* I do not know that Prayers are said to *Eve* in the Roman Church: But I am confident *Epiphanius* was a stranger to any such thing in his time. So that if we examine these words of *worshipping* and *honouring*, as they stand in *Epiphanius*, never so long, they will confess this and no more, that we must think and speak very honourably of *Mary*, as being a most holy woman, and the Virgin Mother of *Jesus*; but that we must at no hand *adore* her with any sort of Invocation or Religious Rites whatsoever. And so I shall conclude this plain business with

P the

The B. Virgin honoured in the fourth Age,

the words of *Epiphanius* : *Although Mary be excellently good and holy, and to be honoured, she is not yet to be honoured so as to be worshipped.* By which we may judge of the modesty or understanding of him, whoever he was, that clapt the name of *St. Epiphanius* to that fulsome † Oration concerning the *B. Virgin* ; where the Angels, *Cherubim* and *Seraphim* are brought in adoring her, &c.

† De Laudib.
Virg. Mar.
Tom. 2. *Epiph.*

As for what we have concerning the *B. Virgin* in the Liturgy said to be *St. Chrysostom's*, and pretended to be translated by *Erasmus*, it is all manifest Interpolation, being directly contrary to *St. Chrysostom's* Doctrine in his undoubted Writings. Could he that affirms, that if

Christ were not by * nature the Son of God, he had been inferiour to the Angels, affirm also that the Blessed Virgin (who is *naturally* no Goddess*) is *incomparably more glorious than the Cherubim and Seraphim* ? Or that she was *unspotted*, whom he plainly notes for † Ambition and Desire of Worldly Glory, and supposes to be checked by *Jesus* for it ? Concerning the Blessed Virgin, and the priviledge she had by being the Mother of *Jesus*, they spake in those days, as we of the Reformation now do. *St. Chrysostom* be witness for this, in the place last cited. “ When thou hearest that Woman “ saying, *Blessed is the Womb that bare thee, and the Paps “ that give thee suck* ; and then himself answering, *Yea, “ rather blessed are they that hear the Word of God and “ keep it.* Do not think that these words argued con- “ tempt of his Mother, but that he would shew how “ little it would profit her that she was his Mother, if “ she were not exceedingly good and faithful. But if it “ profited *Mary* nothing at all, that *Christ* was born of “ her, unless she had the virtue of the Soul, much less “ good will it do us, to have an excellent *Father, Bro- “ ther, or Child*, whilst we have none of their Virtue----

“ For

* *in de angelis igni-
tis et potestate
et sapientia,
et a se ductis
ignis et
Chryl. in Hebr.
c. 1. Hom. 2.
† Id. in Joan.
c. 2. Hom. 20.*

"For we are to place our hope of salvation in nothing, "next to the Grace of God, but onely in our proper "good Actions and Qualities. For if that Relation "which *Mary* had to *Christ*, were a thing of it self profitable, the Jews had found it so in some degree. For "*Christ* was akin to them after the Flesh; and so had the "*City* in which he was born, and so had his *Brethren*. "But whilst his Brethren did just what pleased themselves, the honour they had to be of kin to him, profited them not at all, but they were condemned with "the rest of the World. A great deal more to this purpose you may find in this excellent Father, and that in the place by me cited; by which you may see what the strain of that Age was, as to the Blessed Virgin, and how very unlike to that which was taken up in following times; some instances of which, we have in *Homilies* * De uno Legislatore. In Samaritanam, &c. Tom. 6. falsely attributed to * *St. Chrysostom*.

In short, if we set aside spurious Writings, such as the Sermon concerning the *Assumption* of the Blessed Virgin, published in *St. Hierom's* Works, and attributed by some to *Sophronius*, but was most certainly written long after they were both dead; and the two Prayers (attributed to * *St. Ambrose*) *Preparatory to Mass*; in the second of which, God is desired (according to the Genius of after-times) to inspire the Blessed Virgin first, and then the *Apostles*, and then the *Martyrs* and *Confessors*, with the thought of praying to God for the Priest: But the best learned amongst the Papists have been ashamed to produce these Prayers as *St. Ambrose's*, they are so evidently supposititious. If we set aside also the Book of *Meditations* which the *Latin Rhymes* that are in it convince of Novelty; and the Treatise of the *Assumption*, attributed to *St. Austin*, and the Sermons under his name upon the Feast of the *Annuntiation*, which

* Tom. 4.

could be none of his, because that Feast was not then in being : And in one word, all those Writings which Learned men of the *Roman* Communion have themselves confessed to be at least doubtful, though they had for some time gone under the names of *Fathers* of the *Fourth* Age. Setting these aside, I say, we find but moderate things spoken of the Blessed Virgin.

After all the pains that have been taken to make some of her *Festivals* Ancient, it is more than probable that as yet she had none ; and that the Fathers of the Fourth Age, who are cited for one or two of them, have been, without their consent, made to speak the sense of after Ages, that were loath to be destitute of all pretence from Antiquity, for making the honour of the *Blessed Virgin* out-shine all that was done to others *Martyrs* and *Saints*. For the **Constitutions* do not so much as mention one of her *Festivals*, where one would think they should have omitted none.

* *Constit. A-*
post. l. 8. c. 33.

The *Salutation* of *Ave Maria* has now for some time run through the Religion of the Church of *Rome*, in publick and private Devotions ; but in this Age no Example or Recommendation of any such thing is to be met withal.

No, nor one Prayer to her, do we yet hear of ; which plainly shews, that (whatever the superstition of some one private Person or other might be, of which we cannot affirm or deny any thing) her Worship was no part of the Religion of the Age. If you would know the first bold man, after the *Collyridians*, that brought her into the Church to be invoked ; *Nicephorus* will tell you it was † one *Peter Fullo*, a Bishop indeed, but an *Eutychian*, who found out four very profitable things, if you will believe *Nicephorus* ; one whereof, was, that the *holy Name of the Virgin* should be called upon in every Prayer.

† *Niceph. Hist.*
l. 15. c. 28.

How

How the invention of this man was entertain'd, I cannot say: He lived near the sixth Age. But neither is thus much Antiquity to be boasted of, nor was it for the credit of the Innovation, to have an *Heretick* for its Author.

The Church was full of the *Memories* of the *Martyrs*; but as yet the *Blessed Virgin* had none. What a strange thing was it, that *Theodore*, who ran the honour of the *Martyrs* to that height, that it requires some Candour to bring him down with safety and honour; that he, I say, should make no mention at all of the *Blessed Virgin*, and the Solemnities that were due to her: and that in a Discourse where he professedly brings in the *Martyrs*, supplanting those *Dæmons* which had been so long served by the Pagan World. He could name * *Peter, Paul, Thomas, Sergius, Marcellus, Leontius, Antoninus, and Mauritius*. Do we think the *Blessed Virgin* had been left to be understood amongst the other *Saints* that had their *Solemnities* also, if she had had even in *Theodore's* time any at all? But why should we talk of her *Memories*, when as yet her *Reliques* were not found, nor in all likelihood sought for? since if they had, 'tis not to be doubted, but those Monks, or others like them, that went up and down with the *Bones of Martyrs*, if indeed they were *Martyrs Bones*, would have gratified the curiosity of devout People, with some of those *Reliques* that Posterity a long time after was blessed with; viz. some of the *Blessed Virgin's Hair*, her *Combs*, her *Hood*, her *Slipper*, her *Esposal Ring*, nay and some of her *Milk* too, with such other things, which came not to light, till some Ages after the zeal of *Reliques* began in the Church.

But when once Devotion began to turn towards her, no time was lost; and though it was late first, yet her Service presently overtook, and at last went beyond the honour

* Theod. de
Constantis Grec.
affect. De
Martyr ad Fin.

honour that was done to the other *Saints* and *Martyrs*. The *Thirteenth* Age produced a Relique of the *B. Virgin*, so famous for the Miracle that brought it into *Europe*, and for the Miracles that have been done by it ever since, that the Reliques of the other *Saints* are nothing to it: And that is her House once at *Nazareth*, where she was Born, and visited by the *Angel*; which House was carried by *Angels* out of *Palestine*, into *Dalmatia*, and from thence into *Italy*, where it now stands, and is our Lady of *Loretto's* Chappel. By the *Forthteenth* Century she had gain'd no less than seven *Festivals* in the year, which I mention to shew the growing Devotion of the *Roman* Church towards the *B. Virgin*; not that we make this any great matter of complaint; no, though they were twice seven, if the Facts upon which they were grounded were true, and the grounds reasonable, and God onely were worshipped in the celebration of such *Festivals*.

The later Doctors have made too much amends for the modesty of the Ancient Fathers, who spake indeed of her very honourably, but within bounds. The World was something altered in the middle of the *Seventh* Age, if Pope *Martin* said what we find in † *Anastafius*: *Whoever does not Honour and Adore the Blessed Virgin the Mother of God, let him be accursed.* Of which Curse, * *Germanus* the Patriarch of *Constantinople*, was in no danger, if he address'd himself in this manner to the Blessed Virgin: *No body is replenished with the knowledge of God, but by thee, O most Holy. No body is saved but by thee, O Mother of God. No body is delivered from danger, but by thee, O thou beloved of God. Again: Thou having the power of a Mother with God, dost beyond measure gain Pardon for them who sin beyond measure. For it cannot be that thou shouldst not be heard,*

† *Collegian.*
Anast. p. 73.

* *German.* in
Biblioth. P.
Tom. 12. p.
704.

after she began to be Worshipped.

III

because to all purposes and in all things, and through all things God obeys thee as his true and immaculate Mother. This was pretty well for the eighth Age; as likewise was that of Damascene, who calls the B. Virgin, † *The Lady and Governoress of all Creatures*. No wonder therefore that Cardinal Peter Damian coming long after these, telleth her that she comes before the Altar of Reconciliation, not asking only, but commanding; as a Lady, not as a Servant. I know not whether he was the Author of those glorious Titles which have since furnished some of the Hymns that we meet with in the Offices of the Blessed Virgin? * *The Queen of the World, The Window of Heaven, The Gate of Paradise, The Tabernacle of God, The Star of the Sea, The Heavenly Ladder, by which the Heavenly King came down to us below, and by which man who grovelled upon the ground, ascends in exaltation to Heaven*. But Anselm that lived in the same Age with him, speaks more fully: || *As God is the Father, and God of all things, by his power creating all things; so Blessed Mary the Mother of God, restoring all things by her Merits, is the Mother and Lady of the Universe*. Which agrees very well with that reason he had given before, why her Son went to Heaven before her: † *Perhaps, O Lord, lest thy Court in Heaven should stand in doubt whom it should rather go out to meet, thee their Lord coming to take possession of thy Kingdom, or her their Lady ascending to that Kingdom also, which belonged to her by a Mothers right*. To this nothing could be added in so little a time beyond Bonaventure's Psalter, who taking the Psalms of David, put in Lady instead of Lord, in this manner: *O come let us sing unto our Lady, &c. Let every thing that hath breath praise our Lady*. But not content with this, he framed the * *Athanasian Creed* to her Service too, beginning thus: *Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he should hold a firm Faith*

† Joh. Damasc. lib. 4. c. 15.

* Hom. 46. de Nativ. B. Mar. 1. Tom. 2 p. 105.

|| Anselm. Cant. de Excell. Virgin. c. 11.

† Ibid. c. 7.

See Answer to F. Suits Chall. from p. 478. to p. 495.

* Psalt. Bonav. P. 111, 112. Paris.

con-

The excessive growth of Devotion to the B. Virg.

concerning the *Virgin Mary*; which Faith except a man keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly. And now whosoever shall consider the *Litanies* of the *Blessed Virgin*, and her *Rosaries*, and the *Prayers* and *Hymns* of her *Saturday's Office*, and her *Psalters*, and the vast number of Books of Devotion to her, and the Worship that is accordingly given to her in pretended *Catholick Countries*; whosoever shall consider what they say to her in those *Prayers* and *Hymns*, &c. which the *Speculum Beatæ Virginis*, just now published, has put together, may perhaps find there are Causes of Horror which Monsieur de Meaux is not so much concerned at as he ought to be: He may justly fear, that if the Reformation did not give some little check, neither would these excesses stop here; though in many places nothing now remains to be done, but without any farther reservedness, to erect Altars proper to the *Blessed Virgin* in every Church, as the † *Jesuites* began to do in Chi-

† Trigautii
Exp. ad Sinas.
lib. 5. c. 15.
20.

na.

O Blessed God, look down in thy mercy upon the miserable estate of *Christianity* in so many parts of the *Christian World*!

When the *Blessed Virgin* foretold that all Generations should call her *Blessed*, did she mean that all Generations would Worship her; would Worship her Images and Pictures; would make her a *Mediatrice* between God and man; would ascribe to her the power not of prevailing with *Jesus* only for any thing, but of commanding him too; would offer *Jesus* himself a Sacrifice in her Honour; should burn Incense to her, would use *Rosaries*, *Hours*, and *Psalters* for her especial Invocation and Service; would institute and maintain Fraternities for that Service;

vice;

vice; would build Temples and Chappels to her, and Altars, and by most solemn Invocation every-where, and by proper Rites of Religious Worship, and by letting Devotion run out to her more than to our Lord Jesus himself, to agnize her to be the *Lady of Heaven and Earth*, the *Queen of the World*? No, she did not mean thus, in saying that *all Generations should call her Blessed*: For thus *all Generations* have not served her. Nothing of all this was done to her for *several Generations* after *Christ*; nor any thing of it in comparison till the dregs of Time, till the decay of Learning and Piety, made way for gross Superstition.

The first beginnings of these Corruptions were more general, but the Improvements of them were chiefly owing to the *See of Rome*, which as it grew in power and greatness, so it protected those Abuses more effectually. A Character very ill-beseeming a Church that pretends to be the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*.

The Wit of Man could not devise any thing more serviceable to Errour, to make it spread in the World; and to fix it, than that a powerful *See* grasping at *Supremacy*, and pretending to *Infallibility*, should take it under her wing.

This *See* is the Source of all those Oppositions, which they have met with that demanded a Reformation; it is this *See* alone which hath obstructed a general Reformation, when *Christendom* was otherwise well disposed towards it.

Therefore when Reformation by common consent was made Impossible by the *See of Rome*, what remained

The Conclusion.

maintained but that the National Churches should reform themselves?

Our Reformation was a return to Primitive Antiquity; and that it may prove a leading example, let us pray without ceasing, That God *would bring into the way of Truth all such as have erred and are deceived.*

THE END.

Faults to be Corrected.

- P** Age 81, seventh line from the bottom, for *Consciences* read *Concessions*.
 P. 82 l. 3. for *Reconciled* r. *Recommended*.
 P. 80 l. 6. for *them* read *then*.
 P. 88 l. 7. for *safely* r. *fallly*.
 P. 92 l. 3. for *Prayers* r. *Praises*.

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